

POEM OR PROSE – DOES IT MAKE A DIFFERENCE?:
MEASURING THE EFFECT OF TRANSLATING BIBLICAL HEBREW POETRY
AS POETRY RATHER THAN AS PROSE

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BY
THOMAS HEMPHILL

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*To my wife Marcela,
and our children Anežka and Kryštof*

CONTENTS

| | |
|---|-----|
| ABSTRACT | vii |
| Chapter | |
| 1. THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING | 1 |
| Description of Narrow, Focused, Real-Life Issue of Ministry | 1 |
| Research Question and Thesis | 2 |
| Overview | 3 |
| 2. BIBLICAL-THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS | 5 |
| Introduction | 5 |
| The Problem with Poetry | 7 |
| Characteristics of Poetry | 9 |
| Difficulties in Translating Poetry | 11 |
| Biblical Evidence for Translating Poetically | 12 |
| Approaches to Translating Poetry in General | 16 |
| Priorities in Translating Biblical Poetry | 19 |
| Approaches to Translating Biblical Poetry | 22 |
| Conclusion | 25 |
| 3. LITERATURE REVIEW | 27 |
| Introduction | 27 |
| Commentaries | 27 |
| General Biblical Studies Literature with Sections Relating to Hebrew Poetry | 31 |
| Specialist Literature on Hebrew Poetry | 36 |
| Literature on Translating Biblical Hebrew Poetry | 40 |
| Conclusion – Situating the Thesis | 48 |

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----|
| 4. PROJECT DESIGN | 50 |
| Introduction | 50 |
| Methodology | 50 |
| Psalm 135:5-7 | 58 |
| Proverbs 27:19 | 70 |
| Job 36:5-7 | 75 |
| Ecclesiastes 10:1-3 | 84 |
| Lamentations 3:52-54 | 93 |
| Song of Songs 7:6-9a | 105 |
| 5. OUTCOMES | 118 |
| Introduction | 118 |
| Demographics | 118 |
| Integrity of Data | 120 |
| Psalm 135:5-7 | 125 |
| Proverbs 27:19 | 131 |
| Job 36:5-7 | 134 |
| Ecclesiastes 10:1-3 | 137 |
| Lamentations 3:52-54 | 142 |
| Song of Songs 7:6-9a | 146 |
| Synthesis | 149 |
| Should we Translate Poetically? | 151 |
| Conclusion | 153 |

| | |
|-------------------------|-----|
| Appendix | |
| A. SURVEY | 156 |
| B. QUANTITATIVE RESULTS | 172 |
| Individual Results | 172 |
| Aggregate Results | 180 |
| C. QUALITATIVE RESULTS | 192 |
| Psalm 135:5-7 | 192 |
| Proverbs 27:19 | 202 |
| Job 36:5-7 | 211 |
| Ecclesiastes 10:1-3 | 223 |
| Lamentations 3:52-54 | 231 |
| Song of Songs 7:6-9a | 240 |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY | 245 |
| VITA | 255 |

ABSTRACT

Around one third of the Hebrew Old Testament is written in poetic form, yet apart from using a poetic layout, major Bible translations generally do not translate these materials poetically. This thesis-project examines the biblical-theological foundations for translating biblical Hebrew poetry as poetry, and argues that doing so could help carry over much of the impact and poetic beauty of the original into the receptor language. A research project is then designed in which survey respondents are asked a series of questions measuring perceived likeability, impact, understandability and poetic beauty of poetic translations of six passages made for the purpose of this thesis as compared to three standard non-poetic Bible translations. The survey results show that overall, while respondents recognise the poetic beauty of the poetic translations, that this usually does not translate into increased likeability. The survey results also show that the more domesticating a poetic translation is, the more acceptable it becomes to readers.

CHAPTER 1

THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING

Description of Narrow, Focused, Real-Life Issue of Ministry

Most Bible translations of Old Testament Biblical poetry, both in English and other languages, prioritise semantic accuracy and understandability, which while helping to preserve the semantic propositional content of the original text in a form readily understandable to its readers, has the potential to lose the energy, impact and vitality of the original poetic form. Such loss is considered an unfortunate necessity, because as believers committed to the inspiration of the Scripture, the accurate translation of propositional semantic content is considered more important than the emotive impact of various forms and features used in the original.¹

A survey of most English translations bears this out. With few exceptions (such as the Scottish Psalter² and Milton's Psalms³), apart from an ostensible poetic layout,⁴ little if any attention is made to bring across any of the poetic features of the original into the translation.⁵ While many translators are aware of the poetic nature of the original material that they are translating, it is often thought that it is either too difficult or impossible to carry across poetic effects from the Hebrew into the receptor language. Time pressures and productivity are also a

1. Eugene Nida and Charles Taber, *The Theory and Practice of Translation* (Leiden: Brill, 1969), 5, note that in translating biblical poetry, "we must be prepared to sacrifice certain formal niceties for the sake of the content."

2. Richard Terry, "The Scottish Psalter of 1635," *Music for the Church of God*, http://www.cgmusic.org/workshop/scot1635_frame.htm.

3. John Milton, "The John Milton Reading Room: Psalm Translations," *Dartmouth College*, https://www.dartmouth.edu/~milton/reading_room/psalms/psalm_1/text.shtml.

4. Eric Barreto and Michael Chan, *Exploring the Bible* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 2016), note that while translators use a poetic layout to indicate poetry (p. 64), that some knowledge of the original language is necessary to appreciate other aspects of biblical poetry (pp. 66-67).

5. It could be argued that most translations do preserve the parallelism of the original. Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Poetry*, rev ed. (New York: Basic Books, 2011), 6, 8, notes that unlike other aspects of poetry that are invisible in translation, parallelism is perfectly visible. However parallelism is a macro feature that involves semantic content as well as form, meaning that parallelism will be preserved by a translator even without any special effort to translate poetically.

factor, because while sometimes it is recognised that poetic translations are possible, it is often thought that a good poetic translation would greatly extend the time and/or cost involved in making the translation.⁶

However this thesis contends that the poetic features of the original which give it impact and vitality are as much as part of God's revealed word as the propositional content. The thesis also explores if more care is given to transmitting at least some of this vitality into translations, whether readers will become more engaged with the text and will enjoy reading it more, so that hopefully, with the leading of the Holy Spirit, they will be more greatly transformed by the reading of the Word.

Research Question and Thesis

There have been proponents of poetic translation throughout the history of Bible translation and recent times have seen a renewed interest in this.⁷ However, little if anything has been done to measure the effects of the difference in audience receptivity between poetic and non-poetic translations. The aim of this thesis is to measure the difference in receptivity between poetic and non-poetic translations. If the results of this research do show a significant difference, then they will give weight to the notion that translators ought to consider doing poetic translations of Hebrew poetry.

6. This is the case in a Central Asian Bible translation project with which I am involved. A decision was made by the team to translate poetic portions of the Old Testament as prose because a poetic translation would be too difficult, take too long, and cause the budget to overrun.

7. For example, this is the central thesis of Sarah Ruden's recent book, *The Face of Water: A Translator on Beauty and Meaning in the Bible* (New York: Pantheon, 2017).

Overview

In chapter 2, I will research the biblical-theological foundations for translating biblical poetry into other languages. Firstly, I will examine the characteristics of poetry and the attendant difficulties in translating poetry from one language to another. I will then look at various approaches and possible solutions to translating poetry in general before assessing the suitability of those approaches for translating biblical poetry. In this chapter I contend that to some extent, it is not only possible, but desirable, to translate biblical poetry poetically.

In chapter 3, I will discuss the literature that has been written on the theme of translating biblical Hebrew poetry into other languages. I note that the commentaries and general biblical studies literature, while acknowledging and discussing the poetic nature of the original works, for the most part significantly underplay the role understanding poetry ought to have in interpreting these portions of Scripture. It is really only a relatively small number of specialised works which take poetics seriously as an interpretative aid and a smaller number still that advocate for and give guidance for translating poetically.

In chapter 4, I will select small portions across a range of poetic materials in the Old Testament, being from the Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Ecclesiastes, Lamentations and the Song of Songs, and make my own poetic translations of these portions into English.

I will then test the impact of these poetic translations as compared to three other popular translations that cover a range of translation styles (the ESV, NIV and NLT). I will give these four translations, all unmarked by name but only by an identifying letter, and in a mixed order, to approximately 100 readers. These readers will be asked to read each translation of a given Scripture portion and will then be asked to rate each translation on a series of questions which assess how likeable, impactful, understandable and beautiful or poetic each translation is.

The results of this research ought to show if poetic translation has a positive effect on receptivity with readers.

The final chapter presents the outcomes of my research, evaluates them and then presents some recommendations for the translation of poetic portions of Scripture.

CHAPTER 2

BIBLICAL-THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

Introduction

In SIL, as in a number of other Bible translation organisations, those involved in translation are taught to use Meaning Based Translation. Meaning Based Translation, and its forerunner, Dynamic Equivalence, seeks to analyse the source text, discover its meaning, and then transfer that meaning into the receptor language, using the forms and literary customs of the receptor language.¹ The ultimate aim is for the translation to sound like a native text. That is, the reader, unless he is specifically told, would be unaware that that he is reading a translated text.²

Such a philosophy in Bible translation has a long pedigree, and in the modern era has been championed by Eugene Nida who reacted against the overly literal style of previous Bible translations.³ It is not the only method of translation, but it has come to be accepted as the default by many translation personnel in SIL and other organisations who translate the Bible into the minority languages of the world.

Such an approach to translation in the field of Translation Studies is often referred to as a domestication, or naturalisation approach. That is, in the process of translation, the translator needs to adapt the receiving text as much as possible to make it as familiar as possible to the receptor text world. In this way, the reader in the receptor language has little work to do in processing the text.⁴ For cultures in which many readers may be relatively uneducated, and who

1. Katherine Barnwell, *Bible Translation: An Introductory Course in Translation Principles*, 3rd ed. (Dallas: SIL, 1992), 30.

2. Barnwell, *Bible Translation*, 23.

3. See Eugene A. Nida and Charles R. Taber, *The Theory and Practice of Translation* (Leiden: Brill, 1969).

4. Jeremy Munday, *Introducing Translation Studies: Theories and Applications*, 4th ed. (London: Routledge, 2016), 225-226.

may struggle to read the text as it is, using a domesticated approach makes the text more accessible to the reader.

The opposite approach is known as foreignisation, or alienisation. In this approach, many of the forms and modes of the source language are preserved in the translation.⁵ This makes the processing workload higher for the reader.⁶ In the context of Bible translation for relatively uneducated people, this additional processing load may prove insurmountable and either prevent potential readers from reading the translation, or if they do read it, slow their progress and hinder understanding of the basic meaning of the passage. Retention of foreign forms in translation can in some cases also lead to misunderstanding as different languages can use the same form in different ways.⁷ For example, in Hebrew, poetry is not normally used to relate historical events, whereas in Fula it is the preferred medium.⁸

As Bible translators, our desire is not for our finished products to sit on our potential reader's shelf, but to be picked up, read, understood, and then for the reader's life to be transformed as she engages with the Living God through reading His word. As many of the languages that SIL works in comprise readers who have poor educational levels, then it certainly behoves us to adopt a domesticating approach, so that our readers read and engage with the translation, and their lives are transformed by the Holy Spirit as they read it.

5. Munday, *Introducing Translation Studies*, 225-226.

6. Schleiermacher famously wrote, "In my opinion there are only two possibilities. Either the translator leaves the writer in peace as much as possible and move the reader toward him; or he leaves the reader in peace as much as possible and moves the writer toward him." (Friedrich Schleiermacher, "On the Different Methods of Translating," in *The Translation Studies Reader*, 3rd ed., ed. Lawrence Venuti [London: Routledge, 2012], 49).

7. Katherine Barnwell, *Introduction to Semantics and Translation: With Special Reference to Bible Translation*, 2nd ed. (Horsleys Green: SIL, 1980), 14.

8. Lynell Zogbo and Ernst R. Wendland, *Hebrew Poetry in the Bible: A Guide for Understanding and for Translating*, Helps for Translators (New York: United Bible Societies, 2000), 73.

The Problem with Poetry

However, while domestication has many advantages, it also has its downsides. The downside is often the loss of the form of the source text. Every language has its own peculiar ways of expressing itself. Features such as word order, discourse structures, phonology, grammatical markings and semantic ranges of its vocabulary vary widely from one language to another. When these features are lost in a domesticating translation, then part of the reader's link to the world of the original text is broken. The reader no longer hears the story in a way that might resemble the way that the original audience would have heard it.⁹

However, attempts to retain the form of the original in a foreignising translation usually not only make the translation more difficult for the reader to process, but it can also lead to a loss of semantic meaning, because a form feature in one language may convey a different semantic meaning or nuance in another language.¹⁰ For this reason, in SIL's work, losing the form of the original is regarded as a small price to pay in order to ensure the semantic meaning of the original is carried over into the translation as closely as possible.

One could say that this domesticating philosophy of translation is very appropriate when it comes to prose.¹¹ While there is loss of form in translating prose with a domesticating approach, the loss is often tolerable. Different phonological or grammatical forms between one language and another are usually not as important for the reader as the core meaning of the

9. Ernst R. Wendland, *Comparative Discourse Analysis and the Translation of Psalm 22 in Chichewa, a Bantu Language of South-Central Africa*, Studies in the Bible and Early Christianity 32 (Lampeter, Wales: Edwin Mellon Press, 1993), 10, notes that, "[A]n idiomatic translation... attempts to convey the basic thoughts of the Hebrew (no more, no less) in a meaningful way in the RL. This is done in what is termed, 'common' or 'popular' speech, which exhibits rather little concern for the stylistic, including artistic, forms in which the text was originally composed."

10. Nida and Taber, *Theory and Practice*, 105-106.

11. Hamlet Isaxanli, "History and Policy of Translating Poetry: Azerbaijan and Its Neighbors," *Meta: journal des traducteurs / Meta: Translators' Journal* 59, no. 2 (2014): 313.

passage.¹² Even with discourse structure, some adjustments can be made. For example, the discourse structures of the source and receptor languages can be studied, and if possible, discourse features that may differ by form but have an approximately similar function can be carried over into translation.¹³ For example, in Tajik, the preferred order is reason-result, so if the source text has the order of result-reason, this can be reversed when translated.¹⁴ Such an approach is not overly difficult and often forms part of the training of SIL translators.

In the past, much of SIL's translation work has been the New Testament, and almost all of the New Testament is some sort of prose. Therefore this domesticating approach has served SIL well in the past. It also works well in many parts of the Old Testament, which are also prose.

However, it is to be questioned whether this approach works well with poetry. This is an issue, because around one-third of the Old Testament is poetic in some form or another.¹⁵ Although 1500 languages in the world now have a New Testament, only 650 of them have the complete Bible.¹⁶ More than ever it seems Christians are realising that the whole Bible is God's word, not just, or primarily, the New Testament. Therefore, due to the need to translate Old Testaments for those languages that only have a New Testament, as well as the longer length of the Old compared to the New, there is an ever increasing need for more translation of Old Testament material.

12. Eugene Nida, "Principles of Correspondence," in *The Translation Studies Reader*, ed. Lawrence Venuti (London: Routledge, 2000), 127.

13. Stephen H. Levinsohn, *Self-Instruction Materials on Non-Narrative Discourse Analysis* (Dallas: SIL, 2011), 1.

14. Such an example is given without explanation in Nasrullo Khojayori and Mikael Thompson, *Tajiki Reference Grammar for Beginners Дастури Забони Тоҷикӣ барои Навомӯз* (Washington: Georgetown University Press, 2009), 141, where the result-reason English sentence, "I'm going to study in Moscow in order to learn Russian well," is translated into Tajik as, "То ки забони русиро нағз омӯзам, ман ба Маскав меравам," which translates literally as, "In order to learn Russian language well, I go to Moscow," which is reason-result.

15. Murray Salisbury, *Biblical Hebrew Poetry In Its Contexts* (Jerusalem: Jerusalem Center for Bible Translators, 2016), 2.

16. Wycliffe Bible Translators, "Why Bible Translation?" Wycliffe Bible Translators, <https://www.wycliffe.org/about/why> (accessed January 25, 2019).

Not only is around one-third of the Old Testament poetic in some form or another, but some of the poetic books, such as Psalms, Proverbs and even Isaiah, are the most read and used books of the Old Testament, and indeed of the whole Bible.¹⁷ In addition, some of the poetic books, such as Psalms and Isaiah, are the most quoted books of the Old Testament in the New.¹⁸ So, not only do the poetic books form a large part of the Old Testament canon, they also seem to be disproportionately used not only by the New Testament authors but also by our modern readers.

Given these facts, it behoves us to revisit whether a domesticating approach is appropriate to poetry. While such an approach may be appropriate for prose, it is questionable whether it is similarly effective for poetry, because of the reasons outlined below.

Characteristics of Poetry

Firstly, poetry is written as poetry for a reason. The form of a poem is part of the meaning. A poem is not just the semantic content of its words and sentences. A poem is also the emotions, and the expressiveness that is conveyed not just by the words themselves, but by the poetic features that are used in making it a poem.¹⁹ A poem is a creative act on the part of the poet that causes it to come into being.²⁰ A good poem is the most powerful form of language, in which it achieves the apex of its emotive ability.²¹ Some forms of poetry, such as proverbs, are cast poetically in order to make otherwise mundane hortatory material come alive and to be

17. According to Bible Gateway usage data, three of the four most popular Old Testament books are poetic (Psalms, Proverbs and Isaiah) and these books are also among the ten most popular books of the entire Bible. Jeffrey Kranz, "The 10 Most Popular Books of the Bible (and Why)," OverviewBible, April 1, 2014, <https://overviewbible.com/popular-books-bible-infographic/> (accessed January 25, 2019).

18. Andreas Köstenberger, "New Testament Use of the Old Testament, Survey," in *The Lexham Bible Dictionary*, ed. John Barry (Bellingham: Lexham Press, 2016), under "Introduction."

19. Wendland, *Discourse Analysis*, 2.

20. Carole Beckett, "Translating Poetry: Creative Act or Semantic Science? A Case Study," *Literator* 21, no. 3 (November 2000): 77.

21. Abdulwahab Khalifa, "Translation Studies: Some Problematic Aspects of Arabic Poetry Translation," *International Journal of Sciences: Basic and Applied Research* 19, no. 1 (2015): 315.

appealing and memorable.²² If the features that the poet uses in its creation are neglected in translation, the power and expressiveness of the poem is substantially diminished, if not lost altogether.²³

Secondly, the form of the poem aids in its recall. Most people find poems much easier to remember, or at least to remember the gist of, than they do prose. It is claimed that the poetic features of a poem help people to remember it.²⁴ We are translating the Bible so that God can speak to its readers through its pages and for their lives to be transformed as they grow more like Him. If our readers remember what they have read, they are more likely to meditate on God's word and allow it to change and transform them. Therefore, if we lose the poetic form and its richness both in terms of its literary power and its ability to be remembered, we could potentially diminish the opportunity for life transformation.

This point is underscored by the fact that some poetic books are the most quoted in the New Testament.²⁵ It is possibly not just the semantic content of these passages that lead them to be quoted so often, but also their memorability. These were possibly the passages that were best remembered at the time of the New Testament's being written, including amongst the New Testament writers themselves. It is no wonder also, that even today, even in translation, poetic texts are often the most widely remembered, used and quoted portions of the Old Testament and indeed of the whole Bible.

So what is it about poetry that makes the form so important? In fact, form is important to all writing, not just in poetry. Even in prose, form is important. For example, in the Pauline writings, Paul is an expert at using rhetorical features such as alliteration, plays on words and

22. Murray Salisbury, "Hebrew Proverbs and How to Translate Them," in *Biblical Hebrew and Discourse Linguistics*, ed. Robert D. Bergen (Dallas: SIL, 1994), 435.

23. C.S. Lewis, *Reflections on the Psalms* (San Diego: Harvest, 1964), 3.

24. Ernst R. Wendland, *Analyzing the Psalms: With Exercises for Bible Students and Translators* (Dallas: SIL, 1998), 58.

25. Köstenberger, "New Testament Use," under "Introduction."

examples from everyday life at the time.²⁶ Much of these rhetorical devices are lost in translation, but that is usually regarded as a small price to pay in order to get across the primary meaning of Paul's message. Yet in poetry, the form plays a far greater role in meaning than it does in prose and the loss in translation can be even greater.

Difficulties in Translating Poetry

So why is it so difficult to carry the form across in translation? There are two main reasons why this is so.

Firstly, different languages use different poetic features.²⁷ For example, it is debatable whether Hebrew poetry uses rhythm at all.²⁸ When it comes to rhyme, while it is occasionally used, it is not such a hallmark of poetry as it is in other languages such as English or Tajik. Even when rhyme is used in Hebrew, it is not always used in the same way as in other languages. In English and Tajik, rhyme is normally used at the end of the line, whereas in Hebrew, if rhyme is used, it can sometimes be within a line.²⁹

In other areas, Hebrew makes great use of assonance and alliteration.³⁰ Hebrew also uses chiasm, both within a whole poem and also within a couplet in ways that are rare in

26. George A. Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation Through Rhetorical Criticism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984), 9-10; and Steven J. Kraftchick, "Παθος in Paul: The Emotional Logic of 'Original Arguments'," in *Paul and Pathos*, ed. Thomas H. Olbricht and Jerry L. Sumney (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2001), 68.

27. Wendland, *Analyzing the Psalms*, 58.

28. Philip C. Stine, "Biblical Poetry and Translation," *Meta: journal des traducteurs / Meta: Translators' Journal* 32, no. 1 (1987): 64, argues that it does not, while Gerhard Tauberschmidt, "Considerations for OT Translation," *Journal of Translation* 1, no. 1 (2005): 67, states that it does. Either way, the uncertainty over the issue highlights that it is not a strong feature in Hebrew poetry.

29. Salisbury, *Biblical Hebrew Poetry*, 17; Ernst R. Wendland and Lynell Zogbo, *A Guide for Understanding and for Translating Hebrew Poetry in the Bible* (New York: United Bible Societies, 2000), sec. 3.3.4.

30. Salisbury, *Biblical Hebrew Poetry*, 2-3, 10.

English.³¹ One of the most used features of Hebrew poetry is parallelism, which while found in other languages, is a much stronger feature in Hebrew.³²

Secondly, even when different languages do happen to use the same or a similar poetic feature, there are still difficulties in transferring that feature from one language to another. Rhyme is particularly problematic to mimic,³³ as are alliteration and assonance.³⁴ Chiasm and parallelism are relatively easy to reproduce,³⁵ yet these are two areas that are not strong in English poetry. Chiasm is normally not picked up by English readers and parallelism often sounds repetitive and boring to the English reader.³⁶

Biblical Evidence for Translating Poetically

The Bible itself testifies to the importance of translating poetically in three ways. Firstly, the heavy use of poetry in the Hebrew Bible testifies that it is an important form of communication and an integral part of its message. Secondly, the New Testament being written in Greek rather than Hebrew testifies generally to the importance of translation, and thirdly, in the New Testament we can find instances of actual poetic translation.

Firstly, that such a large portion of the Hebrew Bible was written in the poetic form testifies to the value placed on this form by its writers. As discussed earlier, most scholars claim around one third of it is poetic. That such a large portion of its corpus is poetic testifies that the biblical writers must have thought that the use of the poetic form brought significant

31. Salisbury, *Biblical Hebrew Poetry*, 6-7.

32. Tauberschmidt, "Considerations," 67.

33. Beckett, "Translating Poetry," 86-87.

34. Beckett, "Translating Poetry," 84-85.

35. Joseph Grimes, "From Terse to Loose: Translating Hebrew Poetry into Hawai'i Pidgin," in *A Mosaic of Languages and Cultures: Studies Celebrating the Career of Karl J. Franklin*, ed. Kenneth McElhanon and Ger Reesink (Dallas: SIL, 2010), 417.

36. Wendland, *Discourse Analysis*, 10.

advantages, and the linguistic form of these passages was an integral part of their communicative message.³⁷

The longevity of the Bible as loved and treasured literature testifies to its enduring power to captivate its readers. As Sarah Ruden points out, it is the Bible's beauty itself that helps explain the enduring influence it has had.³⁸ Surely if the poetic form of the original contributed so powerfully to its impact on its readers and on its endurance across millennia, such qualities are also worth bringing across in translation. Interestingly, Ruden notes that some books, such as Ecclesiastes and Song of Songs hardly seem like candidates for inclusion in the biblical canon, and she claims their literary power is what ensured their inclusion.³⁹ Paradoxically, even though according to Ruden, Song of Songs is included in the canon because its original form was popular, in English translation it is one of the least favourite books of the entire Bible.⁴⁰ Could this discrepancy be at least in part due to the poetic power of the original having been largely lost in translation?

Secondly, the Bible itself in the form of the New Testament gives the greatest evidence that it ought to be translated. That the New Testament was written in Greek and not Hebrew, tells us immediately that God's message was meant to be translated. Greek was the contemporary international language of the Mediterranean World and the Near East, but Hebrew was the language of the Old Testament and the tradition that Christianity inherited from Judaism. By writing in Greek, a language much more accessible to a much larger number of people than Hebrew was, the New Testament writers testify to their willingness to move beyond

37. Wendland, *Analyzing the Psalms*, 225.

38. Sarah Ruden, *The Face of Water: A Translator on the Beauty and Meaning in the Bible* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2017), xxii.

39. Ruden, *Face of Water*, xxxv.

40. British and Foreign Bible Society, "You and Your Bible," British and Foreign Bible Society, <https://www.biblesociety.org.uk/get-involved/you-and-your-bible/> (accessed January 25, 2019).

the boundaries of Hebrew and to translate God's message into another language.⁴¹ Specifically, the New Testament writers frequently quoted from the Septuagint, thus endorsing this prior translation of the Hebrew Bible into Greek. Not only did the New Testament writers endorse the Greek Septuagint translation, but they themselves translated into Greek the teachings of Jesus, who most likely spoke in Aramaic.⁴²

Thirdly, we even find some evidence of poetic translation in the New Testament.

Although Jesus did not normally teach in poetry, there are isolated examples that he did, such as the Lord's Prayer. A poetic analysis of the Lord's Prayer in Matthew 6:9-13 shows evidence of poetic features, particularly in the first two verses, as explained below.

Matthew 6:9b-10

9b Πάτερ ἡμῶν ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς·
 ἀγιασθήτω τὸ ὄνομά σου·
10 ἐλθέτω ἡ βασιλεία σου·
 γενηθήτω τὸ θέλημά σου,
 ὡς ἐν οὐρανῷ καὶ ἐπὶ γῆς·

In terms of rhythm, we note that that both lines in verse 9 have a syllable count of 10 and all three lines of verse 10 have a syllable count of 9.

In terms of rhyme, we note that the last line of verse 9 and the first two lines of verse 10 rhyme, with them all ending with the same word σου, giving a nice, pleasing, repetition. There is

41. Lamin Sanneh, *Translating the Message: The Missionary Impact on Culture*, 2nd ed., American Society of Missiology Series 42 (Maryknoll: Orbis, 2009), 36-37.

42. Randall J. Buth, "Aramaic Language," in *Dictionary of New Testament Background*, ed. Craig A. Evans and Stanley E. Porter (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 89.

also assonance with the imperative τω sound on the verbs of each of those lines, as well as with the α sound with the second last word of each of those lines, despite the fact that these words are not all of the same gender. In fact the pattern is so strong that the three lines strictly conform to the following form: imperative with τω ending + articular noun with α ending + σου. These three lines also show parallelism.⁴³ These features can be diagrammed thus:

9b Πάτερ ἡμῶν ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς·

ἁγιασθήτω τὸ ὄνομά σου·

a b c

10 ἐλθέτω ἡ βασιλεία σου·

a' b' c

γενηθήτω τὸ θέλημά σου,

a'' b'' c

ὥς ἐν οὐρανῷ καὶ ἐπὶ γῆς·

What is really significant about this is that most likely, Jesus did not give the Lord's prayer in Greek but in Aramaic.⁴⁴ This means that Matthew did not translate Jesus's presumably poetic Aramaic rendition as Greek narrative, but that he carried over the poetic features into Greek. Although we cannot know what poetic features were used in the original, we see poetic

43. Unfortunately, most commentaries make no mention of the poetic features contained in these verses. An exception is Hans Dieter Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount: A Commentary on the Sermon on the Mount, including the Sermon on the Plain (Matthew 5:3-7:27 and Luke 6:20-49)*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995), 376, who notes that, "The close parallelism is one of syntactical structure as well as sound, constituting paromoiosis (assimilation by assonance)."

44. The topic of the original language of composition of Matthew is highly contentious. Papias, from the second century, claimed that Matthew compiled Jesus's speeches in Hebrew or Aramaic and this was then translated into Greek. However, the lack of other evidence for this claim casts some doubt on it (See John Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005], 2-4, and Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, Word Biblical Commentary 33A [Dallas: Word, 1993], xlv-xlvi, for further discussion on this topic). Regardless of at what point the translation was done, at some stage a rendering from Aramaic (or perhaps Hebrew) into Greek was required.

features in our Greek translation that are both typical and atypical of Hebrew and presumably Aramaic poetry. Typical features carried over are parallelism, assonance and rhyme, and a non-typical feature is rhythm. Even with assonance and rhyme, it is unlikely that the Greek translation used the same assonance and rhyme as the Aramaic original (if it did in fact use them). Thus we find that Matthew most likely directly carried over some poetic features from the Aramaic, as well as carried over the functions of some poetic features using different forms more appropriate for Greek expression.

Thus we can see that the Bible itself, through its heavy use of poetry, its commitment to translation, and in particular to poetic translation, gives evidence as to the desirability of poetic translation of the Scriptures.

Approaches to Translating Poetry in General

So, what is the solution? Firstly, this essay will look at strategies for translating poetry in general, and will then see which of these strategies can be used in the area of biblical poetry.

There are a wide variety of strategies for translating poetry in general. James Holmes lists five approaches that are often taken.⁴⁵ The first approach is to retain the form of the original. As much as possible, the form of the original is imitated in translation. This approach is a foreignising approach and while its advantage is that the original form is faithfully transferred, a disadvantage is that these forms may be quite foreign to the reader of the translation and increase the processing effort on his part. Additionally, because the foreign form is unfamiliar, the intended effect of that form on the reader may well be lost because he is not conditioned to pick up the effect it is meant to convey.

45. James S. Holmes, "Forms of Verse Translation and the Translation of Verse Form," in *The Nature of Translation: Essays in the Theory and Practice of Literary Translation*, ed. James S. Holmes, F. de Haan and A. Popovič (The Hague: Mouton de Gruyter, 1970), 94-98.

The second of Holmes's approaches seeks to look at the function of the form of the original, and then seeks to find a form that fills a similar function in the receiver language. For example, since the *Iliad* is an epic, an English translation should use a form that is appropriate for English epics.⁴⁶ In terms of poetic features, a feature that is used in one language can be replaced with a different one, but which has a similar effect, in another language.⁴⁷

A third approach is content driven. The translator ignores the form of the original and basically takes the semantic content of the poem and forms a new poem in the receptor language using the content of the original. Fidelity to the original semantic content varies, and in some cases, such as the transcreations of the Brazilian translator-poet de Campos, the end work is as much authored by the translator as the original author.⁴⁸ However, a good translator-poet will retain the semantic content of the original while re-creating the poetic vision of the original author.⁴⁹ As Isaxanli puts it, "The translator has to construct a new building in a new place (that is, in his/her own language) similar to what the poet has already constructed."⁵⁰

A fourth approach, called either a "deviant form" or "extraneous form," is not derived from either the content or form of the original. It seems that in this approach, the original poem is merely an idea or starting point for formulating a new poem in the receptor language. The classical *nezire*, of the Muslim world in the Middle Ages, in which a new poem was written in the

46. Although some, such as Nida and Taber, *Theory and Practice*, 133, would argue that in modern English the epic is rendered as prose, and therefore the *Iliad* is best rendered in lively prose. However, in a way, even this demonstrates the legitimacy of this approach, for the equivalent functional form of Greek epic poetry in English may be prose.

47. Beckett, "Translating Poetry," 84-85, does this brilliantly in her translation of Verlaine's "Chanson d'automne" from French to English. The first stanza of the French original uses assonance with nasal vowels to create a mood of listlessness and Beckett uses alliteration with the "l" sound to create a similar effect in English.

48. Else Ribeiro Pires Vieira, "Liberating Calibans: Reading of *Antropofagia* and Harold de Campos' Poetics of Transcreation," in *Post-Colonial Translation: Theory and Practice*, ed. Susan Bassnett and Harish Trivedi (London: Routledge, 1999), 106.

49. Beckett, "Translating Poetry," 87.

50. Isaxanli, "History and Policy," 326-327.

receptor language under the direct influence of a poem in the source language, could be classified in this category.⁵¹

The fifth approach is to render the poem as prose in the receptor language. This essay has already pointed out the problems with this approach, yet it can at times be appropriate in order to convey the content of the original even if much of the impact is lost.⁵² This is a very common approach with translating biblical poetry.

Holmes's approaches are quite generalised and the boundaries are fluid and not fixed and do not describe all possible approaches to translating poetry. Others claim it is impossible to translate poetry, and in some respects they have a point.⁵³ However, as Bible translators we believe we have a divine imperative to bring God's word to those of all languages. Realistically we do not expect everyone to learn Hebrew in order to access the poetry of the Bible, and while theoretically it may be impossible to faithfully translate poetry, we must do the best we can. As such, Holmes's approaches offer a good framework from which to start.

Another aspect to consider is that poetry is an art form. As Levý states, it can be very difficult for a translator to possess the power of imagination required to comprehend and then translate the artistry of a poem and resist just translating it atomistically.⁵⁴ It takes much creativity on the part of a translator-poet to do this well and as a result, poetry has been a ripe field for experimental approaches in translation. Some of this experimentation means using a foreignising approach that challenges the culture of the receiving language.⁵⁵ Perhaps one of the

51. Isaxanli, "History and Policy," 313.

52. For example, this was practiced in the Middle Ages with translations into Azerbaijani. Isaxanli, "History and Policy," 314.

53. So, Alexandra Berlina, "Afterlife Beyond Translation: Joseph Brodsky," *Canadian Review of Comparative Literature* (December 2013): 371.

54. Jiří Levý, *The Art of Translation*, trans. Patrick Corness (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2011), 34.

55. Lawrence Venuti, *The Translator's Invisibility*, 2nd ed. (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2008), 18.

best known of the experimental translators is Ezra Pound. Pound claimed it is essential to translate the energy and impact of a poem.⁵⁶ The vitality of some of his translations is evident.⁵⁷

Priorities in Translating Biblical Poetry

So, when we come to biblical poetry, what can we learn from these approaches? Can we use all of them? Some of them? Is there one approach that is better than the others?

Before we look at how these approaches are applicable to biblical poetry, we need to look at the nature of the biblical text and its role as God's word. As believing translators, SIL workers hold that the Bible is inspired by God and has authority over our lives.⁵⁸ In addition, many of us further believe that the Bible is inerrant. The result of these beliefs is that we believe that the semantic content of the entire Bible, including its poetic sections, cannot be altered. It literally is sacrosanct. Whereas the translator of secular poetry has the freedom to alter the meaning in translation in order to try and preserve the form or the function of form,⁵⁹ the Bible translator does not have such freedom.⁶⁰ For him, the semantic content is primary and any accommodation to form is secondary.⁶¹ Or is it?

Although prose can utilise form, rhetorical and stylistic features to get its message across, with poetry this is much more so, to the point that it can be argued that with poetry the

56. Munday, *Introducing Translation Studies*, 258-259.

57. For example, see Ezra Pound, "Guido's Relations," in *The Translation Studies Reader*, ed. Lawrence Venuti (London: Routledge, 2000), 32-33, which contains his translation of Guido Cavalcanti, a thirteenth century Italian poet, in which Pound experiments with unusual spellings and language that create a foreignising element that draws interest yet is still accessible enough for the engaged reader to understand.

58. See doctrinal statement of the Wycliffe Global Alliance, of which SIL is a member, at Wycliffe Global Alliance, "Doctrinal Statement," Wycliffe Global Alliance, 2018, <http://www.wycliffe.net/en/about-us/doctrine> (accessed January 25, 2019).

59. This is not to say all translators of secular material are free to alter semantic content (e.g., Levý, *Art of Translation*, 47, argues against this), but that depending on the project brief, they may have that freedom, which a Bible translator never does.

60. Wendland, *Discourse Analysis*, 10.

61. Wendland, *Discourse Analysis*, 16-17.

form is part of the meaning.⁶² The poetic features that are used are done so with the purpose of conveying information, whether it is to place the stress on a particular part of the content, to introduce irony or even aid in memorisation. Even when poetic features are not strictly part of the semantic content, they are an integral part of the overall communication. They are used intentionally by the author for purposes of style and emotive effect.⁶³ They give the poem its punch, its power.⁶⁴ If this were not the case, the source language author would not have bothered to use the poetic form as usually it is much easier to write in prose. The very purpose of using the poetic form is a conscious choice of the author as an integral part of the communication process.⁶⁵ Therefore, since the form of poetry is an integral part of the communicative meaning of the poem, it cannot be ignored.

If this is the case, then does that mean that the Bible translator may have to compromise on semantic content in order to try and carry over some of the expressive nature of the poetic form into translation?⁶⁶ And if so, how much does she have to compromise? Or rather, could we say that since the meaning of a poem is so bound up in its form, that to carry over the form does not mean compromising on semantic content, but rather the opposite? That

62. Hansjörg Bittner, "Translating Rhymed Poetry – Thomas Hardy's Neutral Tones," *Nordeutsches Linguistisches Kolloquium* (2010): 20.

63. Salah Salim Ali, "Hysteron-proteron: A Polyfunctional Rhetorical Device – with Reference to Arabic-English Translation," *Meta: journal des traducteurs / Meta: Translators' Journal* 52, no. 3 (2007): 402.

64. Wendland, *Analyzing the Psalms*, 30, states that the Psalms need to be conveyed, "... so that they not only have the right meaning, but also the appropriate impact, appeal and beauty."

65. Robert G. Bratcher and William D. Reyburn, *A Translator's Handbook on the Book of Psalms*, Helps for Translators Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1991), 4.

66. So, Mary Christian, "Found in Translation: Strategies by which Translators Render the *Fables* of Jean de la Fontaine Accessible to Anglophone Readers," *Lethbridge Undergraduate Research Journal* 3, no. 2 (2008): 5, who claims that in translating poetry from French to English, retaining the exact meaning of the original in translation often requires weakening of rhyme and rhythm, or vice versa.

is, carrying over at least of some of the poetic form ensures that the semantic content, along with the effect the source author intended, is better preserved.⁶⁷

Before looking at the different approaches' suitability to Bible translation, we need to consider what the most important principles are that a Bible translator needs to consider when translating poetry.

Firstly, there is the semantic content. The Bible translator is not free to change the meaning, in order, for example, to make the lines rhyme, or add an extra word which changes the semantic content in order to fit the rhythm. As believers, wishing to translate as accurately as possible the semantic content of God's word, we do not have the right or authority to change the semantic content. We are not prophets writing new Scripture for a new people, but we are translators, bringing the timeless word of God to a new language.

Secondly though, we need to realise that the poetic form is an integral part of the meaning of the poem. To ignore it is to ignore an integral part of the message of God's word. Therefore the Bible translator must endeavour in some way to convey the expressiveness of the original poem into the receptor language.

Thirdly, we do need to lean on the side of a domesticating translation approach. In SIL, we often translate for people who have low educational levels. As believers we do not want to increase the mental processing effort of our readers. We want them to engage with the Scriptures and for God's word to change their lives. However, we also need to recognise that God gave even uneducated people very high mental capacity, and that a flat text can be quite boring. People of most cultures do respond to the poetic devices of their culture. Relevance Theory recognises that weak, indeterminate and multiple possible implicatures are an important

67. As Nida, "Principles," 127, states, "...a lyric poem translated as prose is not an adequate equivalent of the original. Though it may reproduce the conceptual content, it falls far short of reproducing the emotional intensity and flavor."

feature of poetic text.⁶⁸ In fact, they give the reader the freedom to interpret for himself, thus increasing his engagement with and interest in the text. Even in the source language, poetry is an unfamiliar form of the language and it is precisely this strangeness that gives poetry its power.⁶⁹ Although poetic ambiguity may to some extent increase the mental processing effort required of the reader, this heightened requirement for mental engagement may actually serve to engage the reader as it delays or suspends clarification of definite meaning and draws the reader into the interpretative process.⁷⁰ One of the purposes of this thesis is to test whether this is the case. If so, then we as translators need to be astute to what our readers can handle, and we should be prepared to let our translation have a little bit of a strange or foreignising flavour if we think our readers can handle it, and if we think it may actually increase their interest and therefore engagement with the text.

Approaches to Translating Biblical Poetry

In light of these priorities, we can now look at Holmes's five approaches to poetry translation and see which ones, if any, can be used in Bible translation.

The first approach of retaining the form of the original means we keep the semantic content, and it means that on the surface we are also carrying over the form of the original. It does, however, lead to a foreignising approach, which is not ideal. Additionally, while we may on the surface be retaining the form of the original, this form may not mean the same thing for the receptor audience as it did for the source language audience.

68. Ernst-August Gutt, *Translation and Relevance: Cognition and Context* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1991), 156-157.

69. Nicholas P. Lunn, *Word-Order Variation in Biblical Hebrew Poetry: Differentiating Pragmatics and Poetics*, Paternoster Biblical Monographs (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2006), 2.

70. Miriam McIlfatrick, "Where the Truth Lies in Translated Poetry: a Doris Kareva Poem in English," *Interlitteraria* 18, no. 1 (2013): 182.

There are, however, cases where this approach may be appropriate. There can be cases where the form of the original does convey a similar effect in the source language. For example, although Hebrew does not use rhyme as often as English does, when it does, carrying over of rhyme can be very effective in English. Assonance and alliteration are used greatly in Hebrew, and although English does not use them as much, when it does, it has a similar effect.⁷¹ So if this can be carried over without changing the semantic content, it can be very effective.

One major feature of Hebrew poetry, parallelism, is a classic example of this approach which is employed in most Bible translations. As already stated, parallelism is quite foreign to English. It can come across as childish and nonsensical to readers of other languages,⁷² and yet it is so integral to Hebrew poetry, and also tied in to so much of the semantic content, that it is almost impossible not to mimic it in translation. It is also one of the easier features of Hebrew poetry to carry over into the receptor language.⁷³ Because it is so pervasive in Hebrew poetry, someone from a language where parallelism is not a standard poetic feature should, over time, become acquainted with this poetic feature through constant exposure to it as they read more and more of the Bible. This is an example of a foreignising approach to translation that is both almost unavoidable and which, because it is used so often, is a poetic feature that can be learnt by those in the receptor language.

The second approach, to look at the function of the form in the original, and then to choose another form in the receptor language which has a similar function, could be well utilised in translating Hebrew poetry.⁷⁴ For example, if alliteration or assonance is used in the Hebrew poem, then this effect could be achieved by rhyme in English. With this approach, all

71. Salisbury, *Biblical Hebrew Poetry*, 5.

72. Heber Peacock, *A Translator's Guide to Selected Psalms*, *Helps for Translators* (London: United Bible Societies, 1981), 1.

73. Bratcher and Reyburn, *Psalms*, 4.

74. Wendland, *Discourse Analysis*, 11, advocates this in his approach to translating the Psalms into Chichewa.

three considerations of preserving semantic meaning, using a poetic form and leaning towards a domesticating approach can be achieved. In most situations, this approach has the potential to achieve good results.

The third approach, of taking the semantic material and then writing a new poem in the receptor language, does seem to preserve the semantic content, however it does take a great deal of care on the part of the translator that he has actually been faithful in doing this without subtracting information or adding new information.⁷⁵ The advantage of this method, if applied properly, is that a new poem based on the source language norms of poetics can be constructed and the result is likely to be a poem that is very domesticated and thus easy to understand for our readers, as well as impactful. The downside to this approach is that it requires a very high level of skill on the part of the translator who needs to be both a translator and a poet.⁷⁶ In many respects, this is probably the ideal approach, yet the limitation is finding a person who has the required skill and the time to do this successfully.⁷⁷

The fourth approach, of a deviant form, which is only very loosely based on both the semantic content and the form of the original, is unsuitable for Bible translation as we do need to preserve the semantic content in translation.

The fifth approach, of rendering into prose, is actually very common in Bible translation, especially with meaning based translations. While it is faithful in preserving the semantic content, a great opportunity is missed to carry over the effect, and even meaning, that is in the

75. This must be carefully distinguished from other forms of translating such as re-writing, in which the translator “improves” or ideologically adjusts the text by changing the semantic content or emphasis. See Munday, *Introducing Translation Studies*, 199.

76. At least in the Brazilian context, a common belief is that only poets can properly translate a poem from one language to another. See Gisele Dionísio da Silva, “Shakespeare’s *Sonnets* in Brazil: Striking a Balance Between Losses and Gains in the Translation Process,” *Meta: journal des traducteurs / Meta: Translators’ Journal* 54, no. 4 (2009): 833.

77. Isaxanli, “History and Policy,” 324, notes this difficulty in the realm of non-biblical poetry translation.

poetic form.⁷⁸ While it would be preferable to use one of the poetic approaches, this prose form may have to be used when one of the other approaches is for some reason unsuitable.⁷⁹

If any of these approaches is to be successful, a translator or translating team with considerable skill is required, who can both recognise and understand poetic features of the source language as well as those of the receptor language,⁸⁰ and who has the ability to transfer the function of these features in some way into the receptor language.⁸¹

Conclusion

So in conclusion, which approach should a translator use in translating Biblical poetry?
My conclusion would be:

If a translator-poet of sufficient skill is available, and there is enough time for the process, the third approach of taking the semantic material, and being very careful not to add or subtract from it, and then write a new poem in the source language, is going to best achieve all our goals of faithfulness to semantic content, as well as naturalising the translation so that it effectively, through the poetic form, conveys the effect, mood and power of the original.

However, this approach requires finding a person with such skill, and they are extremely rare. Even when such a person is found, the process is quite long and the *skopos* of the project may not allow for such a long period of time. In that case, other approaches may need to be considered.

78. Wendland, *Discourse Analysis*, 12.

79. Nida, "Principles," 139, advocates that this may be necessary in many cases because, "a kind of dignified prose where the original employs poetry, since, in general, Biblical content is regarded as much more important than Biblical form."

80. Salah Salim Ali, "Critique of Aspects of Translation of the Poetry of the Pre-Islamic Poets and also of 'Wormhoubt's' Translation of Al-Mutanabbi," *Meta: journal des traducteurs / Meta: Translators' Journal* 35, no. 4 (1990): 733.

81. See, Beckett, "Translating Poetry," 82, who describes translating Verlaine, a symbolist poet.

The next best approach would usually be the second one, that of finding equivalent forms in the receptor language. The use of this approach must be conditional though. For example, whether the translator uses rhyme or not might depend on whether or not he can find words to rhyme in the receptor language that still preserve the semantic content of the original, and that does not sound contrived or forced. The same could be said for the use of other poetic devices such as alliteration, assonance and rhythm and metre.

In some cases, the first approach of mimicking source forms in the receptor language may be helpful if these features are typical of poetry in both languages. This is particularly so with mimicking the parallelism of Hebrew poetry into another language.

Matthew likely used a mixture of the first and second approaches in his translation of the Lord's Prayer into Greek from Aramaic. I will also mostly use a mixture of the first and second approaches in Chapter 4 of this thesis in which I will make some poetic translations of Scripture portions and test their effect on readers.

In some cases, if none of the above approaches work for a given passage, a prose rendition may be necessary. However, even in such a case, the translator should still look for opportunities to try and bring across some of the impact of the poetic features of the source text into the receptor text. Such ways she could do this might be the use of equivalent discourse features, page layout, and unusual, but comprehensible, word order.

In all cases it should be remembered that translating poetry is an art. It will require a lot of experimentation on the part of the translator-poet as she attempts various approaches to find the one that can retain as much as possible of the original semantic content and poetic impact as possible, while also producing a translation that readers like. In one sense it is true, that translating poetry is impossible, and it will take time and skill to translate biblical poetry as best we can.

CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This literature review, while not comprehensive, does cover a representative sampling of the range of materials already written on the topic of translating biblical Hebrew poetry into other languages. The review starts from the more general and proceeds towards the more specific: starting with a review of the commentaries, followed by a review of general biblical studies literature with sections relating to biblical poetry, then specialist literature on Hebrew poetry, finishing with literature specifically on the topic of translating biblical Hebrew poetry.

Commentaries

A good place to start a survey on translating Biblical Hebrew is the commentaries. While they do not usually specifically deal with the issue of translation, they do offer a starting point in dealing with exegetical issues and do represent a broad range of respected scholarship in this area of biblical research. Because of space limitations and also because the Psalms contains the largest section of poetry in the Hebrew Bible, this review is limited to commentaries on the Psalms.

In his commentary, Peter Craigie notes that poetic language is an attempt to go beyond the normal language of prose to express things that are not easy to express with just words. The Psalms use poetry to express insights and the psalmist's relationship with God and cannot be reduced to dogma or creed. They have a certain subjectivity about them and to divorce that from them would be to make them lose their power.¹ Craigie states that parallelism and rhythm are the main forms of Hebrew poetry, though the precise nature of each is far from certain.

1. Peter C. Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, Word Biblical Commentary 19 (Dallas: Word, 1983), 36.

Rhythm and metre in Hebrew are hard to determine because we do not have certainty as to the vocalisation of the text when it was written, and hence cannot with any certainty count the number of syllables in a line.² In comparison, parallelism, while still a debatable topic, is much more clearly understood than rhythm and is often the poetic feature which is carried over most often into other languages.³ Apart from this last comment, and despite his recognition that the original poetic form is an essential part of the communicative message, Craigie does not offer help in translating these poetic features into other languages.

Nancy deClaissé-Walford, Rolf Jacobson, and Beth Tanner give serious attention to the evocative poetic language of the Psalms in their commentary. They assert that the evocative power of poetry in the Psalms does not just contribute to the semantic content, or contain it, but that it is inseparable from the meaning of the Psalms.⁴ The Psalmists employ the power of eloquent, passionate and evocative language to bring the truth of the content home to the ears of its hearers.⁵

DeClaissé-Walford, Jacobson, and Tanner note that the Psalmists use various poetic devices to do this. The most obvious is parallelism which occurs within cola, between cola, between verses, between stanzas and even between psalms. The variety of parallelism employed is virtually endless which gives the poet great freedom in eloquent expression.⁶

DeClaissé-Walford, Jacobson, and Tanner note that Hebrew poetry, unlike many western languages, rarely uses rhyme, and contra Craigie, also does not employ metre or rhythm in the

2. Craigie, *Psalms*, 37-38.

3. Craigie, *Psalms*, 36-37.

4. Nancy deClaissé-Walford, Rolf A. Jacobson and Beth Laneel Tanner, *The Book of Psalms*, New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014), 43.

5. DeClaissé-Walford, Jacobson and Tanner, *Psalms*, 41, 43.

6. DeClaissé-Walford, Jacobson and Tanner, *Psalms*, 40-41.

way we normally understand it.⁷ However, it makes powerful use of features such as metaphor, simile, hyperbole, imagery, drama, intensity and repetition in touching the lives of its readers.⁸

Mark Futato also notes how important the poetry of the Psalms is in conveying its message. Through poetry, God does not want us to just agree with what we are reading; he wants us to be shaken and overwhelmed by his truth.⁹ To achieve that means, various literary devices such as terseness, parallelism, figures of speech and peculiar grammar are employed.¹⁰

W. O. E. Oesterley devotes one chapter in his very lengthy introduction to the forms of Hebrew poetry. This chapter mainly consists of a fairly technical description of parallelism and metre, with a brief discussion towards the end on strophic theory.¹¹ Unlike many commentators, Oesterley notes the Hebrew practice of using pauses for emphasis.¹² He tends to focus on metre and comments on the metre of each psalm throughout the commentary,¹³ which is an interesting focus because, as is evident from this literature review, not all scholars are convinced that Hebrew poetry uses metre, at least in the way Oesterley describes it.

R. E. O. White, in his brief handbook to the Psalms, devotes a proportionally sizeable part of his introduction to the discussion of poetry. He recognises the importance of appreciating the poetry of Psalms in understanding what the Psalms are saying, employing expressions such as, “Poetry is the language in which heart and mind speak together,”¹⁴ and, “the poets of religious experience primarily want to set faith singing.”¹⁵ White discusses numerous poetic techniques employed by the psalmists, such as metaphors, powerful

7. DeClaisé-Walford, Jacobson and Tanner, *Psalms*, 39.

8. DeClaisé-Walford, Jacobson and Tanner, *Psalms*, 42.

9. Mark D. Futato, “The Book of Psalms,” in *The Book of Psalms, The Book of Proverbs*, Cornerstone Biblical Commentary 7, ed. Philip W. Comfort (Carol Stream: Tyndale House, 2009), 10.

10. Futato, “Psalms,” 9.

11. W. O. E. Oesterley, *The Psalms: Translated with Text-critical and Exegetical Notes* (London: SPCK, 1939), 20-33.

12. Oesterley, *Psalms*, 26-27, 31.

13. For Psalm 1, Oesterley, *Psalms*, 119-120, Psalm 2, Oesterley, 123-124, and so on.

14. R. E. O. White, *A Christian Handbook to the Psalms* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984), 16.

15. White, *Psalms*, 22.

descriptions, rhythm, the rhyming of thoughts rather than sounds, the use of refrains, acrostics and the use of unusual words and sentence constructions.¹⁶

Unlike most commentators, White does make some comments on translation. He notes that modern translations bring over the poetic concept of a new thought on each line, but concedes that other devices, such as assonance and alliteration, while adding greatly to the effect of Hebrew poetry, are almost untranslatable.¹⁷

Samuel Terrien notes that most psalms were written by poet-musicians,¹⁸ and were not read by the ancient Israelites but were scanned, modulated, chanted or sung to the accompaniment of musical instruments.¹⁹ Terrien includes a technical description of the strophic structure found in Psalms and relies upon strophic structures for his in-depth analysis of each psalm throughout his commentary.²⁰ Although he does not give advice for translators, in his own translation of each psalm, he bases it upon the strophic structure of the Hebrew text.²¹

Although not really a commentary, in his monograph on the Psalms, James Crenshaw mentions poetic devices such as parallelism, inclusio, acrostics, refrains and thematising a particular word, under the general rubric of the rhetoric of the Psalms.²² Crenshaw's absorption of poetic features under the banner of rhetoric does help to remind us that the psalmists used poetic features for rhetorical purposes. Although Crenshaw does not address translation, realising the rhetorical purpose of the poetic features can help guide us as we seek to transfer rhetorical effects as we translate the Psalms into another language.

16. White, *Psalms*, 17-21.

17. White, *Psalms*, 18.

18. Samuel Terrien, *The Psalms: Strophic Structure and Theological Commentary*, Eerdmans Critical Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 36.

19. Terrien, *Psalms*, 27.

20. Terrien, *Psalms*, 36-41.

21. Terrien, *Psalms*, 41.

22. James L. Crenshaw, *The Psalms: An Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), 96-97.

Some commentaries make no or only passing reference to the importance of poetry in the Psalms. For example James Smith only makes passing reference that Lowth's eighteenth century study of the poetry in Psalms is still valuable, as well as a three sentence comment on the relationship of parallelism to chiastic structure.²³

In his critical commentary, Artur Weiser does not really discuss poetic features except to comment on source critical issues in relation to Hebrew poetry and some of its features, such as its borrowing from surrounding cultures,²⁴ as well as its historic development within Israelite culture.²⁵

Overall, most commentaries on the Psalms mention poetry to various extents. For Oesterley, Terrien, and more so for deClais  -Walford, Jacobson and Tanner, poetic considerations sometimes inform their analysis of each Psalm, although their methods vary. For others, although mentioning poetry in their introductions, it does not form a focus of their exegesis of the Psalms. While these commentaries and others will prove useful for basic exegesis, they are generally not as helpful when it comes to translation.

General Biblical Studies Literature with Sections Relating to Hebrew Poetry

J. C. L. Gibson's Language and Imagery in the Old Testament

The chapter on poetry in J. C. L. Gibson's book does not really discuss the poetic features that concern us as translators. He claims that biblical Hebrew poetry is marked by two dominate features: a rough metre based on stress rather than syllables, and parallelism.²⁶

23. James E. Smith, *The Wisdom Literature and Psalms*, Old Testament Survey Series (Joplin: College Press, 1995), chap. 1, under "A. Poetic Parallelism."

24. Artur Weiser, *The Psalms: A Commentary*, trans. Herbert Hartwell, Old Testament Library (London: SCM, 1962), 23-24, 52.

25. Weiser, *Psalms*, 24, 42-43, 52-53.

26. J. C. L. Gibson, *Language and Imagery in the Old Testament* (Peabody: Hendrickson: 1998), 53-54.

Gibson does point out the lack of abstract nouns in Hebrew,²⁷ and that many concrete nouns came to be used in a more abstract sense.²⁸ This may help explain the vivid earthiness of many Hebrew expressions and could give a hint to the translator to look for similar earthy and vivid expressions in the receptor language.

David Dorsey's The Literary Structure of the Old Testament

While David Dorsey's book is not about Hebrew poetry per se, it is about literary structure, and as this is one of the features of Hebrew poetry, it is worth looking at what he has to say.

In his discussion of literary structure, Dorsey is concerned with parallelism, one of the features of Hebrew poetry. He discusses the development of studies in parallelism from Lowth's 1753 study up to the publication of his book,²⁹ and discusses how the use of parallel arrangements creates a sense of pleasure and satisfaction for an audience, and its repetitiveness makes it easier to remember.³⁰ He also warns against the danger of forcing parallel structures and chiasmi on a text and reckons that most of those proposed are unconvincing.³¹ In his chapter on the Psalms, Dorsey analyses the literary structure of some selected Psalms.

While Dorsey does not directly offer advice for translators, some of his observations are nevertheless helpful. Parallel arrangements were useful for pleasure and memorisation for the original audience, and we should try and make this the same for audiences of our translation. Dorsey's structural analysis of some of the Psalms can also help in carrying that structure over to

27. Gibson, *Language and Imagery*, 4-6.

28. Gibson, *Language and Imagery*, 66.

29. David A. Dorsey, *The Literary Structure of the Old Testament: A Commentary on Genesis-Malachi* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999), 18-19.

30. Dorsey, *Literary Structure*, 29.

31. Dorsey, *Literary Structure*, 33.

our translation, but we must be careful to also heed Dorsey's own advice not to naively accept all proposed parallelistic and chiasmic theories proposed.

Tremper Longman's How to Read the Psalms

Tremper Longman's book has a few chapters devoted to Old Testament poetry. He makes similar observations as other scholars, such as the features of parallelism including chiasm,³² ellipsis,³³ and imagery.³⁴ Longman subscribes to the school of thought that Hebrew poetry does not possess metre.³⁵

Longman makes an interesting contrast between prose and poetic forms, comparing the prosaic Red Sea account of Exodus 14 with the poetic account of Exodus 15. Both accounts describe the same event, yet the prose account contains more historical information while the poetic account has more feeling and excitement and moves the whole person. The function of poetry is not preciseness but emotiveness.³⁶ Although Longman does not give hints for translators, the translator can still learn from this. Translation of poetry should try and achieve the same, with a focus on translating the emotive force of the passage rather than a pre-occupation with semantic preciseness.

Longman also notes that while reading poetry is pleasurable, it is more difficult to read and interpret than prose.³⁷ As translators schooled in Meaning Based Translation, this is a challenge to us. If we are to truly try and bring across both the difficulty and pleasure of reading poetry, we may need to forgo our insistence on immediate comprehensibility in order to produce a text with a similar effect as the original: difficult yet emotive and pleasurable.

32. Tremper Longman III, *How to Read the Psalms* (Downers Grove: IVP, 1988), 95-105.

33. Longman, *Psalms*, 106.

34. Longman, *Psalms*, 111-121.

35. Longman, *Psalms*, 108.

36. Longman, *Psalms*, 91-92.

37. Longman, *Psalms*, 90, 92-93.

Longman also discusses the challenge the modern reader has in understanding the imagery of a culture far removed in space and time. His solution is for the reader to consult commentaries and other works about Old Testament background.³⁸ However, having to consult a commentary while reading a poem does tend to detract from the reading experience, and in addition, many of the languages for which SIL translates do not have access to these sorts of resources. Many translations need to be “stand alone.” This adds to the burden of the translator: to try and find a way of translating poetry, retaining its poetic impact with imagery and yet not losing the reader too much with imagery that they find difficult to understand or which they may misinterpret.

Although not offering advice for translators, in his section on grammatical parallelism, Longman does offer up his own translation of Psalm 2:5, as follows:

Then he rebukes them in his anger
and in his wrath he terrifies them.³⁹

In his translation, Longman has preserved the variation of grammar between the lines (swapping the position of the verb) that exists in the Hebrew poetry. While the second line is not natural English grammatical order, it achieves a poetic effect by relieving monotony and drawing focus to the second line. This is a good example of how the translator can bring across poetic features in translation.

38. Longman, *Psalms*, 118.

39. Longman, *Psalms*, 105.

Angel Sáenz-Badillos's A History of the Hebrew Language

In his book on the history of the Hebrew language, Angel Sáenz-Badillos has a short section on archaic biblical poetry.⁴⁰ He notes some peculiarities of poetry such as a specialised vocabulary and grammar not usually found in prose. Sáenz-Badillos notes that biblical poetry often reflects a language style from an earlier stage of Hebrew and with a closer affinity with its neighbours, possibly because poetry is not as easy as prose is to edit over time as the language changes.⁴¹

Sáenz-Badillos notes that the characteristics of ancient biblical Hebrew poetry could be due to its greater antiquity relative to prose, although that does not account for all divergence from prose.⁴² Thus it is important for the student of biblical poetry to realise that while peculiarities in biblical poetry may indicate poetic features, sometimes, and particularly in more ancient poems, it could just reflect a different usage from a different era or the archaising tendency of poetic works.

Summary

The works surveyed in this section cover similar material to the commentaries, noting poetic features, particularly parallelism. Other features are mentioned, but not consistently, and we notice that as in the commentaries, the presence of rhythm in Hebrew poetry is debated. Like the commentaries, there are some hints for the translator, but not a great deal of information that is of much practical use.

40. Angel Sáenz-Badillos, *A History of the Hebrew Language*, trans. John Elwolde (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 56-62.

41. Sáenz-Badillos, *History*, 56-57.

42. Sáenz-Badillos, *History*, 61-62.

Specialist Literature on Hebrew Poetry

Wilfred Watson's Classical Hebrew Poetry

Wilfred Watson's book on biblical Hebrew poetry will be very useful for the translator. He covers in detail the many aspects of Hebrew poetry, such as metre, parallelism, structure, sound, imagery and other poetic devices. Due to the length and nature of his book, Watson is able to delve into the arguments on more controversial topics such as metre, giving arguments for it,⁴³ against it,⁴⁴ and the difficulty in defining and determining metre in such an ancient language.⁴⁵ Despite the difficulties, Watson does see metre as present in Hebrew poetry.⁴⁶

Watson's careful and detailed analysis of each aspect of Hebrew poetry will be invaluable to the translator, however his greatest help to the translator would be his emphasis on the function of each poetic feature. In the early comments in his book, Watson himself states that function pervades his book and is explained in all his examples,⁴⁷ and a reading of his book demonstrates his promise to be true. For example (and these are only a sample), he gives the function of metre as indicating tempo and texture and demonstrating a poet's skill,⁴⁸ the function of parallelism is to express merismus, to heighten antithesis, to express harmony, for emphasis, and to express inevitability,⁴⁹ the function of assonance is to link the poem's components together and to give emphasis,⁵⁰ and the function of alliteration is primarily one of providing cohesion.⁵¹

43. Wilfred Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry: A Guide to its Techniques*, 2nd ed. (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1986), 99-100.

44. Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry*, 109.

45. Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry*, 91-92.

46. Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry*, 99-100.

47. Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry*, 30.

48. Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry*, 111-112.

49. Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry*, 125-126.

50. Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry*, 224.

51. Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry*, 227.

Although Watson does not spell out how function is important for the translator, its usefulness should be apparent. The task of the translator is to attempt not only to render semantic content into another language, but also to render the effect of the original, and that is related to function. Not all languages possess the same poetic features, and even when they do, the features and their functions may not match. If we can determine what the function of a poetic feature is in a passage, we can explore what poetic feature to employ in the receptor language to achieve the same or a similar function to the original.

While Watson's book is not aimed at translators and he gives no explicit advice for them, occasionally, like other scholars, he makes comments which the translator ought to note, such as his comment in his chapter on metre that, "Surely the original Hebrew had some additional 'native' component (metre?) which is filtered out in a rendering."⁵² It is the filtering out in rendering which ought to concern the translator. Perhaps it is because we have become so used to this "filtering out" that we accept it as unavoidable. Yet, the challenge for the translator is to attempt, in some way, not to filter out these components in rendering but to make an effort to bring these components over when translating into another language.

Robert Alter's The Art of Biblical Poetry

Robert Alter's book is often regarded as one of the more important works on biblical poetry and is therefore worth reviewing. Alter's primary focus is on parallelism, which he sees as the primary marker that sets poetry off from prose in biblical Hebrew writings.⁵³ Like others, Alter doubts that Hebrew has a strict metre, and it is because of this, and also that other features of Hebrew poetry are invisible in translation, that he focuses on semantic parallelism.⁵⁴

52. Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry*, 109.

53. Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Poetry*, rev. ed. (New York: Basic Books, 2011), 6.

54. Alter, *Art of Biblical Poetry*, 8.

Of course this neglect of non-parallelistic features is not entirely useful for the translator who wishes to bring out some of these normally invisible features in translation. Nevertheless, this book is still useful because Alter's work on parallelism does actually delve into some significant issues that go beyond the mere repetition of thought, such as kennings⁵⁵ and formulaic beginnings.⁵⁶

Alter also makes the important observation that in contrast to similar contemporary languages, while they used poetry for just about everything else, ancient Hebrew writers rarely used the poetic form for narration.⁵⁷ This is important because it reinforces the idea that poetic writings in Hebrew were not written so much for the purpose of informing the reader about the details of specific events, but for some other purpose, possibly didactic or in some way emotive. This lends weight to my view that in the translation of biblical poetry, translation of the emotive form (or its equivalent in another language) is just as important in conveying the intention of the original author as is translation of the propositional content.

Nick Lunn's Word-Order Variation in Biblical Hebrew Poetry

Nick Lunn's study on pragmatics and poetics is quite unique, and perhaps because he is a translator himself, very relevant to the task of the translator.

This book is based on Lunn's doctoral studies, in which he seeks to differentiate between pragmatic and poetic reasons for non-standard word order in Hebrew poetry. Most scholars assume that when poetry departs from the standard VSO order it is for poetic reasons, but Lunn notes that in the narrative genre in the Hebrew Bible, 14.5% of verbal sentences

55. Alter, *Art of Biblical Poetry*, 16.

56. Alter, *Art of Biblical Poetry*, 12.

57. Alter, *Art of Biblical Poetry*, 29.

deviate from standard VSO word order.⁵⁸ Since this is narrative, the deviation cannot be due to poetic reasons, but is rather due to pragmatic reasons. Lunn therefore posits that non-standard word order in poetry can be either due to pragmatics, or to poetics.⁵⁹ This begs the question then: how can a Bible interpreter and translator ascertain when variation is due to pragmatics or poetics, and answering this questions is a major focus of Lunn's thesis.

In the case of parallelism, Lunn discovers that when the A line has standard word-order and the B line has non-standard word order, the reason for the B line deviation is usually for poetic rather than pragmatic reasons.⁶⁰

Overall, Lunn notes that of the times poetry deviates from standard word order, 75% of occurrences can be attributed to pragmatic reasons, with the remaining 25% attributed to poetic reasons, with the vast majority of those found in the B line.⁶¹

Pragmatics and poetics are treated differently when translating a text. For this reason, Lunn's work is important for the interpreter-translator, because before translating poetic features of text, the translator needs to know whether any variation in word order is due to pragmatics or to poetics so that she can translate accordingly.

58. Nicholas P. Lunn, *Word-Order Variation in Biblical Hebrew Poetry: Differentiating Pragmatics and Poetics*, Paternoster Biblical Monographs (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2006), 8.

59. Lunn, *Word-Order Variation*, 5, 94.

60. Lunn, *Word-Order Variation*, 120, 275.

61. Lunn, *Word-Order Variation*, 277-278. Lunn actually states that, "In 25.6% of the non-canonical clauses the word order may be ascribed to pragmatic marking, while in the remaining 8.4% the underlying influence is poetic defamiliarisation." It would appear that Lunn has made a typographical error because these two statistics add up to 34% rather than 100%. Reading the rest of Lunn's statistics, we discover that 34% of clauses are non-canonical, and that therefore 25.6% and 8.4% are the proportions of the *total clauses* and not of *the non-canonical clauses*. I have therefore adjusted Lunn's statistics to reflect the proportion of pragmatic markings verses defamiliarisation to clauses with non-canonical (that is, non-standard) word order rather than the total number of clauses.

Hassell Bullock's An Introduction to the Old Testament Poetic Books

Despite the hopeful title, Hassell Bullock only briefly discusses poetic features in his book. His discussion does not really offer anything new to the conversation as he only mentions features found in many other works on poetic books, such as brief discussions of parallelism, rhyme, and sound techniques.⁶² Bullock does discuss some of the difficulties in translating Hebrew poetry, noting that we usually lose the beauty of the sound techniques used, among other things.⁶³ Bullock's solution is to refer to the Hebrew,⁶⁴ commentaries and Bible word dictionaries,⁶⁵ however these solutions are not practical for the average reader.

Summary

Of the four books surveyed in this section, Watson's and Lunn's should be most helpful, and Alter's somewhat. Watson's focus on function will help to determine how to translate poetry into another language and Lunn's work will help caution against over-translating features that may not be poetic but rather pragmatic. Alter's work will help provide some of the theoretical basis for poetic translation.

Literature on Translating Biblical Hebrew Poetry

Joseph Gelineau's The Psalms

Joseph Gelineau's *The Psalms: A New Translation from the Hebrew Arranged for Singing to the Psalmody of Joseph Gelineau* is a translation into English of the Psalms that attempts to

62. C. Hassell Bullock, *An Introduction to the Old Testament Poetic Books*, rev. ed. (Chicago: Moody, 1988), 34-41.

63. Bullock, *Poetic Books*, 40.

64. Bullock, *Poetic Books*, 35.

65. Bullock, *Poetic Books*, 42.

translate not just the meaning of the original Hebrew, but its literary form as well.⁶⁶ As such, this book is very interesting for this study because it is essentially attempting to do the same thing as I am, except its methodology is different, as we shall see.

In his introduction, Gelineau states that, “The translation of a poem cannot be made simply by a faithful rendering of its meaning. The whole character of the original language must be conveyed.”⁶⁷ He asserts that when it comes to the word of God, content and form are inseparable.⁶⁸ The reader of the Psalms who allows its rhythms to take hold of him cannot remain indifferent.⁶⁹ In short, Gelineau is convinced that a translation of the Psalms must translate not just meaning, but also form.

Gelineau (and his co-translators) maintain that Hebrew poetry is rhythmic, not according to syllables but according to stressed syllables, something which is sometimes called “sprung rhythm.” This means the rhythm is not based on the number of syllables in a verse, but on the number of stressed syllables in a verse.⁷⁰ As we have seen in other literature, this is by no means an opinion universally held by scholars.

Gelineau and his co-translators in the main have based their translation on carrying over into English the stressed rhythm they see in the Hebrew original, based on the psalm-tones from Gregorian, Ambrosian and other sources, and they are translated in order to be sung according to those traditions.⁷¹ For example, in their translation of the Psalms, the stressed syllables are

66. Joseph Gelineau, *The Psalms: A New Translation from the Hebrew Arranged for Singing to the Psalmody of Joseph Gelineau* (London: Collins, 1966), 11.

67. Gelineau, *Psalms*, 9-10.

68. Gelineau, *Psalms*, 10.

69. Gelineau, *Psalms*, 8.

70. Gelineau, *Psalms*, 10-11.

71. Gelineau, *Psalms*, 11.

marked and each line in the English translation has exactly three stressed syllables even though the total number of syllables in each line is highly variable.⁷²

Although Gelineau's translation is useful for our study, it is based on the premise that Hebrew poetry has stressed rhythm, which is not universally acknowledged. Its translation of form is also mostly confined to the carrying over of this stressed rhythm into English, which unless sung according to Gregorian or similar traditions, may not be very obvious to the reader. Thus, the usefulness of this work is limited for the purposes of my study.

Murray Salisbury's Literature

In his article, "Hebrew Proverbs and How to Translate Them," Murray Salisbury specifically looks at carrying over poetic features when translating from the book of Proverbs. He briefly discusses a description of the proverbs as well as the major features found in Biblical poetry,⁷³ however most of the article consists of giving a method for translating Proverbs along with some practical worked examples of using his method.

Salisbury's approach is very helpful, firstly because it is comprehensive. Unlike Gelineau for instance, who concentrates on just one aspect of Hebrew poetry, Salisbury encourages the reader to identify as many of the varied poetic devices that may exist in a given proverb, such as sound patterns, syntax and morphology, sentence type, syntagmatic and paradigmatic sense relations, proposition type, structural relations within each bicolon, figures of speech and any other stylistic devices.⁷⁴

Salisbury's approach is also helpful because he does not insist on carrying over the same feature found in a Hebrew poem into the receptor language, but rather the effect that this

72. Gelineau, *Psalms*, 17.

73. Murray Salisbury, "Hebrew Proverbs and How to Translate Them," in *Biblical Hebrew and Discourse Linguistics*, ed. Robert D. Bergen (Dallas: SIL, 1994), 437-442.

74. Salisbury, "Hebrew Proverbs," 440-441.

feature achieves. The purpose of analysing the Hebrew proverb is, as Salisbury puts it, to “crack open a proverb” to reveal the depths of its meaning.⁷⁵ Once that is done, then that meaning and its effects can be rendered into the receptor language.

Salisbury’s article is also helpful, because the approach he applies to analysing Proverbs is similar to what I would like to achieve in my thesis, except I would like to apply these principles beyond just the Proverbs, and also incorporate some means of field testing to the final results so as to measure the results of such a process and its translation.

Murray Salisbury’s 42 page booklet, *Biblical Hebrew Poetry in its Contexts*, which I received while studying under Salisbury in 2016, is a very useful companion to the aforementioned article. The bulk of it is a glossary of poetic features and their functions and is extremely comprehensive and will be a very useful reference for the purpose of my thesis.⁷⁶

Ernst Wendland’s Literature

Ernst Wendland has written a copious amount of literature, particularly in recent years, on translating poetic portions of Scripture. Some of his most relevant contributions are listed in this section.

Like Salisbury’s material, Wendland’s *Analyzing the Psalms* is specifically written for translators as an aid to help them translate Hebrew poetry, in this case, the Psalms. Like Salisbury, a major focus of the book is on poetic features, but unlike Salisbury, poetry does not seem to feature as strongly when it comes to the actual process of translation.

75. Salisbury, “Hebrew Proverbs,” 442.

76. Murray Salisbury, *Biblical Hebrew Poetry in its Contexts* (Jerusalem: Jerusalem Center for Bible Translators, 2016).

Wendland spends two chapters discussing parallelism (both connected and distant parallelism),⁷⁷ and another lengthy chapter discussing other features of Hebrew poetry such as iterative language, figurative language and condensed language.⁷⁸ In terms of translation, he discusses the challenges of making a translation that is poetic yet still exegetically faithful to the original as well as easy to understand for the readers.⁷⁹ He gives some useful advice as to how to conduct a workshop on poetic composition,⁸⁰ yet in his step-by-step method for translating psalms there is not much actual practical advice as to how to actually translate poetic features into the receptor language.⁸¹

In the preface of his book, *Lovely, Lively Lyrics: Selected Studies in Biblical Hebrew Verse*, Wendland advocates an oral-rhetorical approach when studying the source text and then an informed-intuitive approach when rendering into the receptor language.⁸² He then spends the rest of the book applying these approaches to selected portions of Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Song of Songs and Ecclesiastes. Another of his books, *Prophetic Rhetoric: Case Studies in Text Analysis and Translation* takes a similar approach,⁸³ this time applying the same principles to selected portions of the prophetic books, particularly the minor prophets.

Wendland's *Studies in the Psalms: Literary-Structural Analysis with Application to Translation*, like his other books, is predominantly comprised of worked examples of analysis and translation of various forms of Scripture, in this case the Psalms. However, particularly in the beginning of this book, he does spend some time discussing poetic features in general. He

77. Ernst R. Wendland, *Analyzing the Psalms: With Exercises for Bible Students and Translators* (Dallas: SIL, 1998), 57-125.

78. Wendland, *Analyzing the Psalms*, 127-169.

79. Wendland, *Analyzing the Psalms*, 227.

80. Wendland, *Analyzing the Psalms*, 232-235.

81. Wendland, *Analyzing the Psalms*, 195-200.

82. Ernst R. Wendland, *Lovely, Lively Lyrics: Selected Studies in Biblical Hebrew Verse* (Dallas: SIL, 2013), xxii.

83. Ernst R. Wendland, *Prophetic Rhetoric: Case Studies in Text Analysis and Translation*, 2nd ed. (Dallas: SIL, 2014), xv-xvi.

identifies features common in poetic discourse, being recursion, parallelism, direct speech, contraction, sound play, displacement, evocative language, figurative language, rhetorical overlay and Psalmic diction.⁸⁴ He then proceeds to give ten techniques for analysing poetic discourse.⁸⁵ This part of the book is of a similar nature to Salisbury's "Hebrew Proverbs and How to Translate Them," and will help to inform my approach as I exegete and translate selected poetic Scriptures in the next chapter.

The most relevant section of Wendland's *Studies in the Psalms* for the purposes of this thesis is Chapter 10, where he performs an empirical test similar to the one I plan to do in this thesis, in order to measure artistic quality between poetic and non-poetic translations of Psalm 134 with a group of readers and listeners. Wendland tested six English versions, three of which were published English language Bible translations (NIV, REB and The Message), two of which were somewhat poetic and one which was a highly poetic version translated by Brenda Boerger.⁸⁶

In terms of methodology, in his results, Wendland, noted that having so many versions for readers to choose from produced a lot of unclear results.⁸⁷ To help reduce this problem, I plan to use only four different versions in my testing. Similarly, Wendland asked 16 questions of respondents, with the result that the sheer number of questions overwhelmed many respondents and degraded the quality of the answers.⁸⁸ To reduce this problem, I plan to only ask seven questions of respondents for each Scripture portion.

84. Ernst R. Wendland, *Studies in the Psalms: Literary-Structural Analysis with Application to Translation* (Dallas: SIL, 2017), 4-9.

85. Wendland, *Studies in the Psalms*, 9-26.

86. Wendland, *Studies in the Psalms*, 422-423. Wendland gives little or no information about the somewhat poetic versions. One is marked as "The Psalms in Verse" and the other is simply marked as "ERW" which is presumably his initials and therefore his own translation.

87. Wendland, *Studies in the Psalms*, 427. It is to be noted that as well as the six English versions already mentioned, Wendland's test included two Chewa versions, meaning respondents had eight different versions in total to deal with.

88. Wendland, *Studies in the Psalms*, 430.

In terms of testing results, despite the results not being as informative as Wendland had hoped for due to the issues mentioned in the previous paragraph, some clear trends were evident. The first surprising results was that Boerger's highly poetic translation was clearly the least preferred of all versions, however one of the somewhat poetic versions, the one simply marked as "ERW" in Wendland's tables, was clearly the most preferred of all versions.⁸⁹ Looking more closely at these two poetic versions, I can see that while as a poet I appreciate Boerger's highly poetic version, it is difficult to understand on first reading, mainly because of the way run-on lines are used. In contrast, the ERW version does not follow a strict poetic format but nevertheless employs some poetic features which makes it pleasant to read and comprehend. The lesson for the purposes of my thesis is that in the next chapter, when I do my own translations, is to focus on keeping the translation comprehensible for the average person, only using poetic features when they do not adversely affect comprehensibility.

Sarah Ruden's The Face of Water: A Translator on Beauty and Meaning in the Bible

Unlike most books on Hebrew poetry, this book is not written by someone who claims primarily to be a Biblical scholar, but by someone who claims to be foremost a translator and poet. As such, Sarah Ruden's book is like a breath of fresh air as she challenges traditional approaches to translating not just biblical poetry but all parts of the Bible.

Ruden bemoans the loss of sound, imagery, emotion and the thought and experience of the original in English translations. She notes that this is often due to the reverence attached to the Bible and the type of freedom that she has as a translator of classical literature is not generally available to the Bible translator.⁹⁰

89. Wendland, *Studies in the Psalms*, 426-427.

90. Sarah Ruden, *The Face of Water: A Translator on Beauty and Meaning in the Bible* (New York: Pantheon, 2017), xxxviii, 5-6.

In her book, Ruden analyses the King James translation of a number of well-known Bible passages, including some poetic ones, and then offers her own translation. For example, with Psalm 23, she offers a very interesting analysis of the Hebrew and compares it to the English of the King James,⁹¹ before offering her own translation.⁹² However, one major shortcoming of her book is that after analysing the poetic Hebrew text, when it comes time to offer her own translations, she does not give any explanation for the choices she makes in them. Ruden's book is helpful in informing my approach to poetic translation, however its usefulness is limited by this lack of explanation to accompany her translations. In contrast, in my own translations, as well as initially interacting with the Hebrew text, I will also give an explanation for the decisions I have made in my translations.

Roelie van der Spuy's "Hebrew Alphabetic Acrostics – Significance and Translation"

In this interesting paper, Roelie van der Spuy discusses the importance of using acrostics in translation and provides his own acrostic translation of Psalms 111 and 145 into his mother tongue of Afrikaans.⁹³ Van der Spuy discusses the functions of acrostics such as aiding memory, providing structure, giving a sense of completeness and adding beauty to the poem.⁹⁴ He discusses the difficulties in translating acrostic poems, that many scholars advise against translating acrostically,⁹⁵ and the options available to the translator who decides to attempt an acrostic translations.⁹⁶

Van der Spuy's paper and translations are interesting and thought provoking and will be useful when I translate Lamentations 3:52-54, which is part of an acrostic poem.

91. Ruden, *The Face of Water*, 64-74.

92. Ruden, *The Face of Water*, 136-137.

93. Roelie van der Spuy, "Hebrew Alphabetic Acrostics," *Old Testament Essays* 21, no. 2 (2008): 527-532.

94. Van der Spuy, "Acrostics," 517-518.

95. Van der Spuy, "Acrostics," 519.

96. Van der Spuy, "Acrostics," 527.

Brenda Boerger's "Freeing Biblical Poetry to Sing"

In her article, Brenda Boerger advocates not just putting Hebrew poetry into poetic form, but putting it into song. She quotes psycholinguistic research that demonstrates the power of song on memory, learning and sociological enhancements.⁹⁷ She gives some examples of translations into song into the Natqsu language of the Solomon Islands,⁹⁸ as well as some into English, including an impressive translation of Psalm 9-10 which preserves both the acrostic structure as well as including rhyme.⁹⁹

Boerger's article is interesting but because my thesis is limited to translating poetically rather than into song, while its underlying principles are helpful in informing my approach, its usefulness as a specific resource is limited.

Summary

These specific works on translating Hebrew poetry will be useful for my thesis, especially those of Salisbury and Wendland who offer good solid material on poetic features and the process of translation. Wendland's empirical testing of the effect of poetic translations on audiences in Chapter 10 of his *Studies in the Psalms* will be particularly helpful for designing my survey.

Conclusion – Situating the Thesis

Most scholarly material on the poetic sections of the Bible, while acknowledging that the poetic sections are actually poetic, do not in practice give much attention to the poetic

97. Brenda H. Boerger, "Freeing Biblical Poetry to Sing," *Open Theology* 2 (2016): 181.

98. Boerger, "Freeing Biblical Poetry," 187-188,

99. Boerger, "Freeing Biblical Poetry," 193-194.

nature of these texts in their discussions. The result is that the poetry of the Hebrew Bible has not been allowed to express itself in commentaries and other works, let alone translations, as much as it should.

To really understand biblical Hebrew poetry better, as this literature review has shown, one must turn to the more specialised literature on the topic. In regards to translation of biblical poetry, the number of useful works becomes even narrower, although there are some excellent books, such as Watson's, Lunn's, Ruden's, Salisbury's and Wendland's as well as some thought-provoking articles, such as van der Spuy's, that will be helpful for my thesis. With the aid of these resources and others, I hope to build on what they have done, with the addition of some research with receptor audiences to give some objective feedback on the efficacy of such translational approaches.

CHAPTER 4

PROJECT DESIGN

Introduction

In this chapter, the design of the project experiment will be described. The purpose of this experiment is to measure, by use of a survey, the difference in effect on readers of poetic translations of several portions of Scripture against three standard published translations.

A large portion of this chapter includes the process of writing the poetic translations that will be used in the survey. This includes a rationale for choosing each passage, a poetic exegesis of that passage, followed by the translation itself with reasons given for the decisions made with each translation, and closing with a brief discussion as to which of Holmes's approaches to poetic translation has been employed.¹

Methodology

Selection of Respondents

Respondents will be invited from my known pool of contacts, who will in turn be invited to ask others to participate. This means respondents are likely to be skewed towards Australians who are somewhat or very familiar with the Bible. They are likely to include roughly equal numbers of males and females and cover all age ranges of those 18 and above. As outlined below, certain demographic data will be collected from respondents which will be included in the analysis in the next chapter.

1. For these approaches, see James S. Holmes, "Forms of Verse Translation and the Translation of Verse Form," in *The Nature of Translation: Essays in the Theory and Practice of Literary Translation*, ed. James S. Holmes, F. de Haan and A. Popovič (The Hague: Mouton de Gruyter, 1970), 94-97.

Due to Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary Institutional Board requirements, respondents must be 18 years of age or older in order to participate. Because the survey is assessing English language translations, respondents must be fluent in English.

Format of Survey

A sample copy of the survey can be found in Appendix A.

The first section of the survey contains the Informed Consent Document, which needs to be filled in, signed and dated in order for the participant's results to be included in the overall data.

The next section, titled "General Questions," asks participants for demographic data which may be useful in analysing data, depending on whether statistically significant numbers of people in various demographic subsets respond to the survey.

In the remainder of the survey, each participant will be asked to read five or six short passages from different poetic books in four different Bible versions. One of these versions will be a new, poetic translation made expressly for the purpose of this thesis. After each passage, participants will then be asked a series of questions. The first question asks the participant if she recognises the passage, and this data may be helpful for later analysis, depending on how many participants indicate each particular category.

The remainder of the questions for each passage ask participants to mark which of the four translations, in their opinion, best answers each question. The analysis of quantitative data harvested from these questions will inform the bulk of the outcomes of this project.

After each question, the participant also has the option of giving a reason for their response. The purpose of this is twofold. Firstly, it might give an explanation if some of the results appear as though the participant may have misread the question (for example, if a

participant answers “A” for both the question, “Which version did you like the most?” and “which version did you like the least?”). Secondly, depending on how many participants choose to answer these questions, this qualitative data can be used to supplement and explain the outcomes attained from the quantitative data.

In his similar survey, Wendland found that the quality of his results was weakened because the number and complexity of his survey questions overwhelmed the respondents.² For this reason, my survey will test only four translations (compared to Wendland’s eight) and ask only seven questions per passage (compared to Wendland’s 16). In addition, rather than asking participants to rate all the translations for each question, participants only need to rate their top choice for each question. While this will deliver fewer data, it is hoped that the simpler nature of the survey will lead to that data having higher integrity.

In order to remove the possibility of any order effect, two measures will be undertaken:

a) In each survey (or at least for the first 24 surveys and then the pattern can be repeated), the order of the passages presented for the first passage will be given in the 24 different combinations possible (e.g. ESV/NIV/NLT/poetic translation, ESV/NIV/poetic translation/NLT, ESV/poetic translation/NIV/NLT, etc.).

b) The order in any given survey will rotate by one for each passage so that the order within each survey also varies. For example, the first version of the survey will have the following order for the passage from Psalms: ESV, NIV, NLT, poetic translation. The passage from Proverbs will rotate through by one to the following order: NIV, NLT, poetic translation, ESV. This pattern will continue until the end of the survey.

The order of A, B, C and D will be consecutive for each passage presented, regardless of which translations these letters represent. This means that with the mixing mentioned above,

2. Ernst R. Wendland, *Studies in the Psalms: Literary-Structural Analysis with Application to Translation* (Dallas: SIL, 2017), 427, 430.

these identifying letters will not correspond to a particular translation. In order for me to track the results, each passage will be marked by a coded number, which the participants are asked to ignore. The coded number will have seven digits with the sixth digit representing a particular translation (1=ESV, 2=NIV, 3=NLT, 4=poetic translation). For example, [Code 0162439] means that this passage is from the NLT. The other digits in the code are spurious, primarily present so that the identifying sixth digit is not obvious to respondents.

Selection of Survey Questions

The aim of this project is to ascertain if a poetic translation of poetic portions of the Old Testament is better received by readers than standard non-poetic translations. “Reception” is a broad term and the questions in the survey reflect a number of metrics connected to the different ways a typical reader may read and understand a text.

The first two questions (marked as questions 2 and 3 on the survey, as the first question asks about passage recognition and is not part of the comparative survey proper) simply ask which version the participant likes the best and the least. These initial general questions are situated first in order to capture the reader’s initial overall impressions before moving onto more specific questions.

Throughout this thesis, it is contended that poetic translations have greater vitality and therefore emotionally impact the reader more than non-poetic translations. Therefore, the next question asks, “Which version had the most impact on you?”

Emotional impact and comprehensibility are not always the same thing, as has been noted earlier in this thesis. Therefore, the next question asks, “Which version was the easiest to understand?” The answers to this question, especially in comparison to the previous question, will help determine the link between emotional impact and comprehensibility.

The next question directly asks about poetry, with the question, “Which version was the most beautiful or poetic?” The answer to this question will help determine if readers’ perception of how poetic a text is increases the emotional impact the text has on them as well as how much they like the text.

The final question asks, “If you wanted to give a copy of this passage to a friend, which version would you use?” Despite attempts at reducing familiarity effect (see below), some readers may consciously or unconsciously recognise a familiar version and choose that out of familiarity, respect for that version or some other reason. Asking which version might be best for another person, rather than themselves, may help them to give a more detached answer less linked to their own historic personal preferences.

Each question also gives the participant the opportunity to give a reason for their response, and this qualitative data may be helpful in proposing the reasons for any differences in answers between the different questions.

Selection of Bible Versions

Since the purpose of this thesis is to measure the reception of poetic translations against standard non-poetic translations, it is important to choose popular versions that cover a range of translations philosophies. For this reason, the 2016 edition of the English Standard Version (ESV),³ the 2011 edition of the New International Version (NIV),⁴ and the 2015 edition of the New Living Translation (NLT)⁵ have been chosen. Apart from the King James Version and its derivatives, these three Bibles consistently rank among the most popular modern-language

3. *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version: Containing the Old and New Testaments* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2016).

4. *Holy Bible: New International Version* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011).

5. *Holy Bible: New Living Translation* (Carol Streams: Tyndale House, 2015).

English Bibles.⁶ These three versions also represent a range of translational approaches, with the ESV being more literal, the NLT being more meaning based and the NIV somewhere in between.⁷

The poetic translation that will be used is one made for the purposes of this thesis. Referring back to Holmes's different approaches to poetic translation which were discussed in chapter 2,⁸ the poetic translations used in this thesis cover a range of approaches. The translations from Ecclesiastes and Lamentations mostly follow his first approach, in which the original form is largely retained. The translations from Psalms, Job and Song of Songs are somewhere on the continuum between the first and second approach. The second approach looks for the function of the forms in the original and then seeks to find forms in translation that have an equivalent function. The translation from Proverbs employs the third approach of creating a new poem with the semantic content of the original.

The translations of each portion are outlined below, along with the reasons for selection of each passage, a poetic exegesis of each passage, the reasons given for translation choices made and a discussion as to which of Holmes's approaches has been employed.

6. See for example, sales statistics at CBA Retailers, "CBA Best Sellers," CBA Retailers, July 2012, https://www.webcitation.org/699uJ1Zxq?url=http://www.cbaonline.org/nm/documents/BSLs/Bible_Translations.pdf (accessed January 25, 2019), which rank the ESV, NIV and NLT as the most popular Bibles sold after the King James and New King James Version; and Barna Group and American Bible Society, "State of the Bible 2015: Research Conducted among U.S. Adults," American Bible Society, February 2015, https://www.americanbible.org/uploads/content/State_of_the_Bible_2015_report.pdf (accessed January 25, 2019), 16, which ranks the NIV and ESV as the most popular versions read apart from the King James and New King James Versions, with the NLT, along with the New Revised Standard Version and the New American Standard Bible roughly equal on a distant third.

7. British and Foreign Bible Society, "Which Is the Best Bible Translation?" British and Foreign Bible Society, <https://www.biblesociety.org.uk/explore-the-bible/which-is-the-best-bible-translation/> (accessed January 25, 2019).

8. Holmes, "Forms of Verse Translation," 95-96.

Selection of Bible Portions to Translate and Test

In order not to overwhelm respondents with too much text to read, only five or six Bible portions will be tested. They will cover a range of poetic materials. Due to the large corpus of poetic material in the Old Testament and the limited number of portions that can be tested, this thesis will not survey the prophetic literature but will confine itself to translating and testing one portion each from Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Ecclesiastes, Lamentations and Song of Songs. All respondents will be given the portions from Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Ecclesiastes and Lamentations, but only some will receive the portion from Song of Songs, for the reason given below. Several factors will be taken into account in selecting appropriate portions from each of these books, as outlined below.

Lesser Known Passages to Minimise Familiarity Bias

One issue with testing Bible passages is that because many of the respondents may already know much Scripture in a particular version, possibly including one or more of the versions used in this survey, is that they may consciously or sub-consciously recognise one of the versions due to familiarity, and that this could influence which version they prefer. In an attempt to mitigate this, portions of Scripture which are not very popular will be chosen. Various Internet Bible platforms are a good source to find out the popularity of a given book or passage. Some of them measure the popularity of books, portions and verses that are accessed on their websites and make that data accessible to the general public.

Avoiding Passages with Textual Issues or Contested Interpretations

The purpose of the survey is to test poetic effects and if a passage has terms or constructions that are interpreted in different ways in the different versions used in the test,

then this could influence respondents' preferences. To minimise this interference, passages mostly free of differing interpretations (at least among the translations used in the survey) will be used.

Avoiding Passages with Unfamiliar or Distracting Terms or Concepts

Unfamiliar terms have the potential to distract the reader. Although it will be difficult to find passages completely free from unfamiliar terms, passages will be chosen that have a minimal amount of unfamiliar terms and concepts.

The respondents will cover a range of people with various attitudes towards the Christian and Jewish faiths and the Bible. For that reason, some themes that are more controversial in modern English-speaking society will be avoided, such as God condoning or appearing to condone such things as war and vengeance.

One passage that may be controversial for some potential respondents is the one from Song of Songs, due to its sensual nature. For some respondents, the sensual nature of this passage may distract them from the overall purpose of this survey. For this reason, not all respondents will be given the portion from Song of Songs, but only those who I suspect may not be offended or distracted by it. Admittedly, the selection of which respondents are given the Song of Songs selection and which ones are not is subjective, and as such, the results from the fewer number of subjectively selected respondents for the Song of Songs portion will mean that the results will not be as robust as with the other portions.

Sufficient Poetic Features

It will be necessary to use Bible portions that are indeed poetic and have sufficient poetic features to bring out in a poetic translation.

Appropriate Length

It will be important to find pericopes that are only a few verses long but which are relatively self-contained and comprehensible without a broader context, as the respondents will not have access to the surrounding literary context.

Psalm 135:5-7

⁵ I know that the LORD is great,
that our Lord is greater than all gods.

⁶ The LORD does whatever pleases him,
in the heavens and on the earth,
in the seas and all their depths.

⁷ He makes clouds rise from the ends of the earth;
he sends lightning with the rain
and brings out the wind from his storehouses. (NIV)

⁵ כִּי אֲנִי יָדַעְתִּי כִּי־גָדוֹל יְהוָה
וְאֲדַנֶּנּוּ מִכָּל־אֱלֹהִים:
⁶ כֹּל אֲשֶׁר־חָפֵץ יְהוָה
עָשָׂה בַשָּׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ

בַּיָּמִים וְכָל־הַיּוֹמוֹת:
 מַעֲלֶה נְשָׂאִים מִקְצֵה הָאָרֶץ⁷
 בָּרָקִים לַמָּטָר עֹשֶׂה
 מוֹצֵא־רוּחַ מֵאוֹצְרוֹתָיו:

Selection of Psalm 135:5-7

On the whole, Psalms is one of the most popular books of the Bible,⁹ so finding a Psalm or portion of a Psalm that does not have the potential to be well-known is a challenge.

According to Kevin Halloran's research, Psalm 135 is the 147th most popular Psalm, or put another way, the 4th least popular.¹⁰ It is also towards the end of the Psalms, which may contribute towards its lack of popularity.

Verses 5-7 form a neat cohesive unit that can be understood on its own and is not too long for our readers. It does not contain any contested interpretations and apart from the word "storehouses," at the end of verse 7, which is translated consistently across the three versions to be used, it does not contain any unfamiliar or controversial terminology or concepts.

Psalm 135:5-7 contains sufficient poetic features to be used in this exercise, such as parallelism, delayed identification and inverted gender matching.

9. Jeffrey, Kranz, "The 10 Most Popular Books of the Bible (and Why)," OverviewBible, April 1, 2014, <https://overviewbible.com/popular-books-bible-infographic/> (accessed January 25, 2019).

10. Kevin Halloran, "The Most Popular Psalms in the Bible," Leadership Resources, May 26, 2014, <https://www.leadershipresources.org/the-most-popular-psalms-in-the-bible/> (accessed January 25, 2019).

Poetic exegesis of Psalm 135:5-7

Psalm 135 was probably related to one of the Israelite feasts, perhaps as one of the Song of Ascents or as one of the Great *Hallel* Psalms,¹¹ and was used liturgically as a hymn.¹² It has many intertextual links with other Psalms or parts of Scripture, either borrowing from them or being borrowed.¹³

Overall, Psalm 135 describes God as lord of creation and history, with our section of verses 5-7 focusing on his role as lord of creation.¹⁴ As we shall see, the Psalmist does this in verses 5-7 by demonstrating God's sovereignty over all other gods.¹⁵ In contrast to the gods made by people, the true God is the one who makes everything, as we see by the word עֲשֶׂה in relation to God's actions being used twice in our pericope.¹⁶

Verse 5

Verse 5 begins with כִּי, giving the reason for the praise commenced in verse 3. The Psalmist then proceeds to give two things that he knows using an emphatic אֲנִי,¹⁷ which he then introduces by another כִּי, and these form a case of synonymous parallelism,¹⁸ thus:

11. William VanGemeren, *Psalms*, rev. ed. The Expositor's Bible Commentary 5 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008), 939; Nancy deClaisse-Walford, Rolf A. Jacobson and Beth Laneel Tanner, *The Book of Psalms*, New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014), 943.

12. Donald M. Williams, *Psalms 73-150*, The Communicator's Commentary (Dallas: Word, 1989), 458; Leslie C. Allen, *Psalms 101-150*, rev. ed., Word Biblical Commentary 21, (Dallas: Word, 2002), 287.

13. Samuel Terrien, *The Psalms: Strophic Structure and Theological Commentary*, Eerdmans Critical Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 858.

14. VanGemeren, *Psalms*, 939-940; Artur Weiser, *The Psalms: A Commentary*, trans. Herbert Hartwell, Old Testament Library (London: SCM, 1962), 790.

15. DeClaisse-Walford, Jacobson and Tanner, *Psalms*, 943.

16. Michael Wilcock, *The Message of Psalms 1-150: Songs for the People of God*, The Bible Speaks Today (Nottingham: Inter-Varsity Press, 2001), 2:247.

17. Mark D. Futato, "The Book of Psalms," in *The Book of Psalms, The Book of Proverbs*, Cornerstone Biblical Commentary 7, ed. Philip W. Comfort (Carol Stream: Tyndale House, 2009), 403.

18. Murray Salisbury, *Biblical Hebrew Poetry in its Contexts* (Jerusalem: Jerusalem Center for Bible Translators, 2016), 22.

כִּי אֲנִי יִדְעָתִי כִּי־גָדוֹל יְהוָה
d c b a
וְאֲדִינּוּ מִכָּל־אֱלֹהִים:
c' (a') d

In Line 1,¹⁹ אֲנִי is weakly paralleled by the 1st person plural ending on וְאֲדִינּוּ in Line 2.

There is much stronger parallelism between the two statements of God's greatness in Lines 1 and 2. We see a repetition using two different names for God. We also see a repetition and expansion of the greatness of God: line 1's גָּדוֹל is expanded and given greater specificity with מִכָּל־אֱלֹהִים, which echoes Exodus 18:11.²⁰ By this stage of Israel's development, it may have been doubtful if many Israelites believed other gods existed, and verses 15-18 indicate that the psalmist knew that these other gods did not really exist.²¹ However, using this expression had a strong rhetorical effect by alluding to a pivotal time in Israel's history as well as emphasising that the one true God is more powerful than anything else that may claim divinity. This also sets up the next two verses in which God has control over the very forces of nature which the surrounding nations believed were controlled by various gods.²²

19. Various terminologies are used to demarcate the units of Hebrew poetry. In biblical Hebrew poetry, each verse usually comprises two lines, and throughout this thesis I will refer to these units as "lines" and "verses." Occasionally, a verse will have a different number of lines and this will be noted. Another way of describing these units is with the terminology of "colon," "bicolon" and "tricolon," where a "colon" is the same as a "line" and "bicolon" is used for a verse with two cola/lines and "tricolon" for a verse with three cola/lines. To further confuse matters, in some, though not all, Hebrew Bibles, all cola of a given verse are normally given on the same line although a visual marker is usually supplied to mark the division of cola. In most English translations however, each colon is normally given a new line. This thesis follows the divisions normally used in English, and to avoid confusion, Hebrew poetry is formatted with each colon having its own line, even though in many Hebrew editions this is not the case.

20. Allen, *Psalms*, 290.

21. W. O. E. Oesterley, *The Psalms: Translated with Text-Critical and Exegetical Notes* (London: SPCK, 1939), 541.

22. John W. Hilber, "Psalms," in *The Minor Prophets, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs*, Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary 5, ed. John H. Walton (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009), 430.

There is a case of poetic effect with the variation of the grammatical norm between lines 1 and 2, with the subject and qualifying adjective in reverse order between the two lines. Interesting, the subject יְהוָה is the last element in line 1, another poetic device for the purpose of delaying identification in order to heighten suspense,²³ which is repeated in line 1 of verse 6.

Verse 6

Verse 6 has three lines with the first making a general statement and the subsequent two expanding and giving further detail regarding the general statement of line 1. It could be argued that lines 2 and 3 combined are some sort of parallelism with line 1 but if it is there, it is a weak parallelism. There is however a phonological link between lines 1 and 2 with rhyming of the שׁ sound between the relative particle אֲשֶׁר of line one and the verb עָשָׂה of line 2. Rhyming has the function of linking these phrases more closely together.²⁴

Line 6 starts with כֹּל which is a repetition of the כֹּל in line 2 of verse 5 and which is again repeated in line 3 of verse 6. The repetition of this word serves to denote the pervasiveness of God's power and authority over everything.

As in line 1 of verse 5, in line 1 of verse 6 we again see the delayed identification of the subject יְהוָה right at the end of the line. To do this, the Psalmist has reversed the normal order of subject and object. As well as delayed identification, and thus again building suspense,²⁵ this unusual order also serves to place אֲשֶׁר in the second position of its line, making its assonance with עָשָׂה, as discussed above, which is in the first position of its line, more obvious. Lunn has noted that fronting of אֲשֶׁר כֹּל is quite common as a pragmatic feature, so this is probably a

23. Wilfred Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry: A Guide to its Techniques*, 2nd ed. (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1986), 337.

24. Salisbury, *Biblical Hebrew Poetry*, 17.

25. Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry*, 337.

pragmatic feature rather than a poetic one.²⁶ This means that in my translation I should still mark this, but not necessarily with a poetic device but a pragmatic one.

Lines 2 and 3 give all the realms in which the Lord does whatever he pleases. These are given in two pairs, starting from the highest point, the heavens, and progressing down through the earth, to the sea and to the lowest point, the uttermost depths or the sea.²⁷ These four places as a merismus express the total realm of the created order, the first three being the three domains found in creation,²⁸ with the last, the תְּהוֹמוֹת, harking back to the deep of the creation account in Genesis 1.²⁹ The use of inverted gender matching in lines 2 and 3 between the grammatically masculine שָׁמַיִם and מֵיִם in first place in their respective lines and the feminine אֲרָץ and תְּהוֹמוֹת in second place in their respective lines serves to heighten this merismus.³⁰ Together the use of these four places and the way they are poetically presented in the text denotes the utter and absolute sovereignty of the Lord over absolutely everywhere. Unlike the pagan deities, who many people believed only had power over their specific sphere of influence, the Lord is sovereign everywhere.³¹

The use of inverted gender matching mentioned in the previous paragraph also gives a rhyme between the common plural ending ם of the two masculine nouns. This creates a pleasing effect for the listener and binds the two lines together, again helping to underscore the totality of God's control.

26. Nicholas P. Lunn, *Word-Order Variation in Biblical Hebrew Poetry: Differentiating Pragmatics and Poetics*, Paternoster Biblical Monographs (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2006), 198-199.

27. Robert G. Bratcher and William D. Reyburn, *A Translator's Handbook on the Book of Psalms*, Helps for Translators Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1991), 1103.

28. Carl Friedrich Keil and Franz Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament* (1866-1891; repr., Peabody: Hendrickson, 1996), 5:794.

29. Bratcher and Reyburn, *Psalms*, 1103.

30. Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry*, 125, 323.

31. VanGemen, *Psalms*, 941.

Verse 7

Verse 6 told us that the Lord has total sovereignty everywhere, and now verse 7 gives examples of weather phenomena over which he controls. In the ancient Near-East, most people personified the various weather phenomena as gods, however the Psalmist reminds his hearers and readers that various weather phenomena are not gods, but they are physical forces under the control of the one God, their Lord.³²

Verse 7 consists of 3 lines all of which are parallel and which describe various weather phenomena over which the Lord has control.³³ This parallelism can be seen thus:

| | | | |
|--------------|-----------------|---------|---------|
| מַעֲלָה | נִשְׂאִים | מִקְצֵה | הָאָרֶץ |
| | c | b | a |
| בְּרָקִים | לְמָטָר | עֹשֶׂה | |
| a' | c' | b' | |
| מוֹצֵא־רוּחַ | מֵאוֹצְרוֹתָיו: | | |
| c'' | b'' | a'' | |

In each line, element *a* represents the verb, *b* is the weather phenomena and *c* is the location to which or from which the weather phenomena is applied. So in terms of the verbs, we have participles in lines 1 and 3 and a *qatal* verb in line 2 all depicting some sort of action. The verb in line 2, עֹשֶׂה, has already been used in verse 6, underlining the that God is the one who makes all these things.

32. Terrien, *Psalms*, 859, Hilber, "Psalms," 430.

33. It is difficult to know what category of parallelism this verse belongs to. According to Ernst R. Wendland's definitions in his *Analyzing the Psalms: With Exercises for Bible Students and Translators* (Dallas: SIL, 1998), 63, synonymous parallelism exists when the lines mostly repeat the same semantic content. In verse 7, strictly speaking they do not as different weather phenomena are mentioned in each line, however the categories are the same. Overall the effect is that the Lord produces all of these different weather phenomena.

Element *b*, the weather phenomena, ranges from the ethereal נְשָׁאִים to the violent בְּרָקִים of line 2 and then the רוּחַ of line 3 which could be either violent or gentle, but which in any case could possibly allude to God's creative act of giving רוּחַ (in this case, breath or spirit) to life as it is used in verse 17.³⁴ Verse 17 will not be part of the testing in this thesis, so I will not try and harmonise the different nuances of the use of רוּחַ in verses 7 and 17.

Element *c* is a little vaguer, but in general denotes some sort of location, although the "location" in line 2 is another weather phenomenon, being the rain. Still, the focus is on the lightning which accompanies the rain, much the same way the mist of line 1 is associated with the ends of the earth and the wind of line 3 with the storehouses.

We see poetic variation in the placement of verbs, with line 2 showing an unusual order with the verb נָשָׂא appearing last instead of first. The purpose of this is most likely to give stylistic variation to the three lines and maintain the reader's or hearer's interest.³⁵

We do see some rhyme in line 3 with a common צִי sound with מוֹצֵא and מְאוֹצְרוֹתָיו. The irregular form of the *Hiphil* participle מוֹצֵא may actually be for the purpose of producing rhyme with מְאוֹצְרוֹתָיו.³⁶ The end of line 1 of this verse ends with אָרֶץ, just like the end of line 2 in verse 6. The close proximity of these two lines would have created a nice sounding rhyming and word-repetition effect. The use of both of these poetic devices is probably just to make the Psalm sound nice and catchy.

There are two translational difficulties in this verse. The first is the interpretation, and therefore translation into English, of בְּרָקִים לְמָטָר in line 2. The multivalent לְ is difficult to interpret here. Does it mean that God makes lightning into rain or does it mean he makes

34. So, Wilcock, *Psalms*, 2:247.

35. Salisbury, *Biblical Hebrew Poetry*, 15.

36. Allen, *Psalms*, 286.

lightning to accompany the rain?³⁷ The first interpretation would not make much sense for modern people and in line with most modern translations,³⁸ the second interpretation will be used when translating this clause. In any case, lightning often accompanied heavy rain in Israel,³⁹ so the co-location of these two weather phenomena in literature would have been natural.

The other difficulty is with מֶאֱוָרָתָיו, meaning “his storehouses,” which does not accord with modern meteorological understanding. The ESV, NIV and NLT all translate this with “storehouses” and in order not to provide a semantic translational difference with these translations, which could interfere with the aim of this thesis to test the effect of poetic translation, I will also use “storehouses” in my translation.

Poetic translation of Psalm 135:5-7

5 I know that the LORD is great,
Above all gods is our Lord.

6 All things he desires to do -
in the heavens, on the earth
in the sea, in all the depths
- the LORD does.

7 From the ends of the earth, he raises the mist,
To go with the rain, he flashes the lightning,
And from his storehouses, he summons the wind.

37. See Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary*, 5:794-795, who discuss the options here. Konrad Schaefer, *Psalms*, Berit Olam: Studies in Hebrew Narrative & Poetry (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2001), 318, notes how marvellous it would have appeared to the author that flaming lightning was mixed with rain.

38. NLT and NIV translate as “lightning with the rain,” NET (*NET Bible* [n.p.: Biblical Studies Press, 2005]) as “lightning bolts accompany the rain” and ESV, NRSV (*The Holy Bible: New Revised Standard Version* [Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1989]) and CSB (*The Holy Bible: Christian Standard Bible* [Nashville: Holman Bible Publishers, 2017]), as “lightning(s) for the rain.”

39. Allen, *Psalms*, 291.

Of course, it has not been possible to bring across all the function of the poetic features in the original into this translation. However some have been and an explanation of how that has been done follows.

Verse 5

It was noted that in verse 5, אֲנִי was emphatic. Due to the English language always needing the pronoun, I have not been able to replicate this in English without overdoing it.

As noted, both lines of verse 5 are synonymously parallel. Unlike Hebrew, in English, straight parallelism is often regarded by readers as boring. It is therefore necessary to vary things somewhat in the second line so as to hold an English reader's attention. It was also noted that in the Hebrew there is variation between the lines with the subject and qualifying adjective or prepositional phrase being reversed. For both these reasons, in the English translation the word order has also been varied between lines 1 and 2, with "LORD" taking initial position in the subordinate clause in line 1, and "Lord" taking final position in line 2. This should serve a similar effect of the parallelism in the original by the use of interesting repetition.

I have been unable to reproduce the delayed identification of יְהוָה at the end of line 1, however I have achieved a similar effect with the end placement of "Lord" at the end of line 2.

Metre is not a strong feature of Hebrew poetry and as discussed in the previous chapter, it is doubted by many if it is indeed a feature. However, in English it is a strong feature. Therefore, each line in verse 5 consists of 7 syllables.⁴⁰

40. Note how my approach to metre is somewhat different to Gelineau's (Joseph Gelineau, *The Psalms: A New Translation from the Hebrew Arranged for Singing to the Psalmody of Joseph Gelineau* [London: Collins, 1966]), 232, who has translated Psalm 135 with three stressed syllables in each line. As discussed in the previous chapter, Gelineau's approach is based on psalm-tones from Gregorian and other sources and is not likely to be familiar to most English speakers.

Verse 6

It was noted that verse 6 consists of three lines with the first making a general statement with the other two expanding on that. The delayed identification of the subject of יהוה in line 1, possibly for pragmatic reasons, was also noted. To reproduce the suspense that this produces into English, I have pushed back “the LORD” to an extra, final line of this verse. That is, my line 1 corresponds to line 1 of the Hebrew minus “the LORD.” I have then taken out the verb “does” from line 2 and combined that with the “the LORD” to form a new line 4 in the English. This has the effect of transferring the suspense of delayed identification over into English. It also removes some of the words of line 2, enabling me to keep a constant rhythm of 7 in lines 1-3. Line 4 deviates from this standard rhythm, which helps to focus attention on the final line with its focus on the LORD’s power.

As noted, כָּל/כֹּל is repeated three times in verses 5-6 to emphasise the totality of God’s greatness. Neither the ESV, NIV nor NLT replicate this, however in my translation I have replicated כָּל/כֹּל with “all” each of the three times it occurs. This should help to emphasise the totality of God’s greatness as it does in the Hebrew.

The effect of the merismus in lines 2 and 3 has been replicated in English with the use of three features so that the reader understands they are to be read as a unit. The first is that they are indented together. The second is the use of lower case letters to begin each line and the lack of punctuation at the end of both lines. The third is the bracketing of the segment with a dash “-” at the end of line 1 and another one at the beginning of line 4.

Verse 7

The close parallelism of the three lines of verse 7 was noted with very consistent repetition of categories in each line. That has been reproduced in the English with a very consistent format in each line. Although the Hebrew mixes the order of the categories in each line, in English, a standard order is best to achieve the rhetorical effect of God's total control over these elements of nature. The tendency for this to be boring in English is mitigated by use of three very different types of weather and other dramatic language which will shortly be discussed.

In order to tie the lines together, a constant rhythm of 11 is used in each line. There is also assonance with the final syllable of each line comprising the sound of short "i". The structure of each line is also similar, consisting of preposition + location + comma + "he" + dramatic verb + weather phenomena. Within this unifying structure, dramatic language is used to keep the reader's attention.

In the Hebrew it was noted that there is some rhyme in verse 7. I have not been able to reproduce that rhyme, but some of the effect of it can be reproduced by using dramatic language. The first part of each line is not very remarkable, but more intense language is used in the second half. In line 1, the ethereal word "mist" is used to match the Hebrew נֶשֶׁמַיִם. This then contrasts with the dramatic "lightning" of line 2. The more dramatic verbs of "raises," "flashes" and "summons" are used as well, to help maintain the hearer's or reader's interest.

Translation approach

A mixture of Holmes's first and second approach has been used in translating this passage.⁴¹ In many cases, it has been possible to bring over the form of the original into

41. Holmes, "Forms of Verse Translation," 95-96.

translation, such as delayed identification in verses 5 and 6 (although the line it occurs in was changed), word and semantic category repetition in verses 6 and 7 and assonance in verse 7. On the other hand, some forms of the original have not been brought over, but a different form with a similar function has been used, such as the use of metre in place of alliteration and unusual word order throughout and the use of poetic punctuation in place of rhyming in verse 6.

Proverbs 27:19

¹⁹ As water reflects the face,
so one's life reflects the heart. (NIV)

19 כַּמַּיִם הַפָּנִים לִפְנֵי
כֵן לִב־הָאָדָם לְאָדָם:

Selection of Proverbs 27:19

Like Psalms, Proverbs is one of the most popular books of the Bible.⁴² *Knowing Jesus* ranks Proverbs 27:19 as the 510th most popular verse in Proverbs out of a total of 915 verses.⁴³ While not the least popular of the proverbs, there are more verses in Proverbs that are more popular than are less popular than Proverbs 27:19. Hopefully this should remove most familiarity bias from the testing results.

Most Proverbs are just one verse and this one is no exception. Therefore, Proverbs 27:19 is a self-contained unit that can easily be comprehended on its own. It does not contain

42. Kranz, "Most Popular Books."

43. Knowing Jesus, "Most Popular Verses in Proverbs 27," Knowing Jesus, <https://bible.knowing-jesus.com/popular/Proverbs/27> (accessed January 25, 2019).

any unfamiliar or controversial terms, themes or interpretations and has sufficient poetic features to be used for this exercise.

Poetic exegesis of Proverbs 27:19

Proverbs 27:19 is a masterpiece of poetry, with its seeming ambiguity and terseness making the reader think deeply to understand its meaning.⁴⁴ This apparent ambiguity is mainly caused by the complete lack of any verbs.

The proverb is made up of two lines in almost complete parallel, in a case of base parallelism, thus:

| | | |
|---------|-------------|-----------|
| בְּמִים | הַפְּנִים | לַפְּנִים |
| c | b | a |
| כֵּן | לִבְהָאָדָם | לְאָדָם: |
| c' | b' | a' |

In line 1, מִים is paralleled by לֵב in line 2. The significance of this parallel from both an exegetical and poetic point of view will be discussed shortly. The other two parallelisms are with the repeated noun פְּנִים in line 1 with its corresponding repeated noun אָדָם in line 2.

There is an incredible amount of rhyme and alliteration in the proverb. Every word except one either rhymes or has alliteration with something else. The beginning particles of each line have alliteration with the letter ב. Every word in line 1 ends with the rhyming sound of ם, and this is matched by the rhyming repetition of אָדָם in line 2. In fact, the only word not to have a rhyming or alliterative partner in the whole proverb is לֵב, and this lack of conformity

44. Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Poetry*, rev. ed. (New York: Basic Books, 2011), 222.

draws attention to this word as being the key word of the proverb.⁴⁵ In this regard, a poetic exegesis is essential in not just aiding a poetic translation, but in correctly exegeting the meaning of the proverb.

This highlighting of *לֵב* causes us to notice its contrast with its corresponding noun in line 1, *מַיִם*. The meaning of *מַיִם* may not be readily apparent for the modern reader in the age of glass mirrors, but for the ancient, some sort of body of water was the best and easiest way a person could look at himself. However, when a person looked at himself in water, he would see his physical form, such as his face, but would not see into his soul, his thoughts or his character. To see one's character, the deep things of a person, requires that person to look into his heart, the seat of emotions, thoughts and understanding.⁴⁶ This then is the key to understanding this proverb: the contrast between the outward *מַיִם* which merely reflects the outward form of a person and the *לֵב* which reflects who the person, the *אָדָם*, really is on the inside, that is, the person's true nature.⁴⁷

Some interpreters are unsure about whether this proverb refers to a person looking into his own heart to see his own true nature, or whether he is looking at another person's heart to see that person's true nature.⁴⁸ However, thinking about the first line should resolve this apparent difficulty. In the ancient world, water was an object of reflection, or precisely, self-reflection. A second person does not need to look into water to see the first person, because he can see a much clearer image by look at him directly. The only person who needs to use water

45. Murray Salisbury, "Hebrew Proverbs and How to Translate Them," in *Biblical Hebrew and Discourse Linguistics*, ed. Robert D. Bergen (Dallas: SIL, 1994), 448, 450.

46. Salisbury, "Hebrew Proverbs," 450, notes that both the water and heart act as mirrors.

47. William D. Reyburn and Euan McG. Fry, *A Handbook on Proverbs*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 2000), 581; Tewoldemedhin Habtu, "Proverbs," in *Africa Bible Commentary*, ed. Tokumboh Adeyemo (Nairobi: WordAlive, 2006), 808.

48. Duane Garrett, *Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs*, The New American Commentary 14 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman 1993), 220-221.

to see someone's face is the person himself. In this tightly paralleled proverb then, the only feasible solution to the identity of the second דָּמָה in line 2 is the first דָּמָה , just as it is in line 1.⁴⁹

The lack of verbs can also be resolved. In order for someone see to his face in the water, he needs to look at the water. In a language such as English, where a verb is necessary, some sort of verb indicating looking would be the appropriate one to supply.

Poetic translation of Proverbs 27:19

¹⁹ Look to the mirror to see your face,
Look to your heart to see your nature.

In this translation, "mirror" has replaced "water," as for the modern reader, looking into water is not the main way a person would seek to see himself. The main purpose of מַיִם in the original is as an object of reflection and for the modern reader, the most obvious object of reflection is not water but a mirror.⁵⁰

"Nature" has been chosen to translate the Hebrew דָּמָה . There are two reasons for this. The first and primary reason is that for the Hebrew, דָּמָה could mean more than just the physical person, but could also represented that person's true character or nature. "Man," and to a lesser extent, "person," can sometimes have a similar nuance in English, but not as strongly as the Hebrew דָּמָה . The stronger of these two, "man," also leads to the second reason for avoiding a literal translation, and that is in the contemporary context, "man" is not viewed by all potential readers as being inclusive of both genders. In the light of the controversial nature of gender in translation, it is better to avoid such terms if possible.

49. Allen P. Ross, "Proverbs," in *Proverbs ~ Isaiah*, rev. ed., The Expositor's Bible Commentary 6, ed. Tremper Longman III and David E. Garland (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008), 219.

50. So also Salisbury, "Hebrew Proverbs", 453.

The possessive pronoun “your” is added as it is clear from the exegesis above that the reflection is self-reflection, and without some sort of explication, the verse becomes somewhat obscure for an English reader. Explicating with “your” rather than an impersonal “one,” such as the NIV does, helps to make the proverb more personal and therefore engaging.

The tight symmetry between the two lines has been preserved by line 2 repeating line 1 verbatim except for the two key parallel pairs of “mirror/heart” and “face/nature.” This verbatim repetition also helps preserve some of the rhyme, alliteration and word repetition of the original.

That the two pairs of “mirror/heart” and “face/nature” break the repetition between the lines serves to place the focus on these words. We noted that in the original the primary emphasis falls on לֵב, whereas in this translation, it must share this emphasis with the three other non-repeating words.

The original proverb has a surface ambiguity which means the reader needs to think deeply and ponder in order to interpret its meaning. Similarly, with the second line of this proverb translated as, “Look to your heart to see your nature,” the interpretation is not immediately clear. What does it mean to look into one’s heart? What is one’s nature? In a similar way to the original, the interpretation is not instantly recoverable but requires some thought to do. In doing this, one of the poetic effects is preserved in translation.

Translation Approach

In many ways, Holmes’s third approach of poetic re-creation has been used in this example.⁵¹ So much of the form and vocabulary from the original has not been retained that in essence it is a new poem, albeit based on faithfulness to the semantic content of the original.

51. Holmes, “Forms of Verse Translation,” 96.

Key components of the original vocabulary and form of the original, such as the repetition of מִיָּמִים and מִיָּמִים have not been replicated. Not only that, but the key word of מִיָּמִים does not appear at all in the translation, instead being replaced with the functional equivalent “mirror.” The alliteration and rhyme of the original is totally absent from the translation. Instead, very different poetic devices that suit English better have been employed. Verbs and pronouns, absent from the Hebrew, have been supplied.

It could be argued that this translation is not an example of Holmes’s third approach, but rather a heightened form of the second approach in which poetic features in one language are substituted for other features in the receptor language. Indeed, Holmes’s categories are fluid and perhaps this translation lies somewhere on the fuzzy border of the second and third approach, however the radical changes from the original to the translated form would suggest it tends more towards his third approach. Yet, despite the radical changes in form, the semantic content of the original has been retained. It will be interesting to see the results of the survey and if the results for this Scripture portion vary markedly from the others.

Job 36:5-7

⁵ “God is mighty, but despises no one;
he is mighty, and firm in his purpose.

⁶ He does not keep the wicked alive
but gives the afflicted their rights.

⁷ He does not take his eyes off the righteous;
he enthrones them with kings
and exalts them forever. (NIV)

הֵן־אֶל כְּבִיר וְלֹא יִמָּאֵס⁵

כְּבִיר כַּח לֵב:

לֹא־יִחִיָּה רָשָׁע⁶

וּמִשְׁפָּט עֲנִיִּים יִתֵּן:

לֹא־יִגְרַע מִצַּדִּיק עֵינָיו⁷

וְאֶת־מְלָכִים לִכְסֹּא

וַיֵּשְׁבֻם לְנֹצֶחַ וַיִּגְבְּהוּ:

Selection of Job 36:5-7

How many readers persevere to the end of the speeches in the book of Job? According to the *Knowing Jesus* website, not many. Job 36:5 is the 658th most popular verse out of 1070 in Job, verse 6 the 1020th most popular and verse 7 the 723rd most popular.⁵² On the *Top Verses* website, out of a total of around 31,000 verses in the whole Bible, Job 36:5 ranks number 21,758, verse 6 at 26,582 and verse 7 at 22,413.⁵³ This pericope is therefore a good candidate to mitigate familiarity bias.

This passage is also short and self-contained. There is some textual conjecture in the commentaries at one or two points, but this is not actually reflected in the primary documents nor in the comparative translations used in this thesis. Apart from this, it contains no controversial or particularly difficult interpretations, themes or values.

52. Knowing Jesus, "Most Popular Verses in Job 36," Knowing Jesus, <https://bible.knowing-jesus.com/popular/Job/36> (accessed January 25, 2019).

53. [Chapman, Pete?], "Welcome to Top Verses," Top Verses, <http://topverses.com> (accessed January 25, 2019).

Poetic Exegesis of Job 36:5-7

This pericope is part of Elihu's final speech and in many ways prefigures God's reply from chapter 38 onwards.⁵⁴ In these verses, Elihu declares the greatness of God as well as his justice towards the righteous and the wicked.⁵⁵

These verses are not as obviously poetic as some of the other texts used in this thesis, however they still contain poetic features which should help in translating and understanding them. One poetic feature is that this text contains a number of grammatical and literary difficulties, which many commentators attempt to explain by offering emendations to the text, despite no textual support for such emendations. A poetic exegesis can however, resolve these difficulties without resorting to these unfounded textual speculations.

Verse 5

Lines 1 and 2 repeat the relatively uncommon Hebrew word כְּבִיר.⁵⁶ The use of unusual words is a poetic feature.⁵⁷

The verb יִמָּאֵס at the end of line 2 has no object and along with the lack of verb in line 2, this has led some commentators to propose various textual emendations which supply the apparently missing object.⁵⁸ It is to be noted, however, that מָאֵס does not always come with an

54. Robert L. Alden, *Job*, The New American Commentary 11 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1993), 347.

55. Norman C. Habel, *The Book of Job: A Commentary* (London: SCM, 1985), 503, expresses it as defending God's innocence of injustice in governing the world.

56. John H. Walton and Kelly Lemon Vizcaino, *Job*, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 363, notes that of the ten occurrences of the word in the Bible, seven of them are in Job and they are used in a variety of contexts.

57. Salisbury, *Biblical Hebrew Poetry*, 5.

58. H. H. Rowley, *Job*, New Century Bible Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970), 227-228, offers various possible solutions, all involving emendation of the text. Helen Nichols, "The Composition of the Elihu Speeches (Job, Chaps. 32-37)," *The American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures* 27, no. 2 (January 1911): 162, offers some confusing textual emendations, suggesting line 1 should finish with כְּבִיר כח, and with line 2 as בר לב or as בחלב בר.

object, such as in Job 7:16 and 34:33,⁵⁹ although the Septuagint does supply ἄκακον (innocent person) as one. Interestingly, although all three of the ESV, NIV and NLT supply an object here, none follows the Septuagint but instead they use “any,” “no-one” and “anyone” respectively. The lack of an object in Hebrew serves to give focus to the verb by ellipsis of its expected object,⁶⁰ which is further emphasised by the unusual placing of the verb in final position in the line.

Line 2 lacks a verb but this is not unusual in Hebrew poetry and does not serve as justification for proposed conjectural amendments to the text. Rather, line 2 is an amplification of the כְּבִיר of line 1, explaining it in more detail.

כֹּחַ לֵב is a figurative way of expressing God’s strength, possibly meaning that he does not waver and is resolved in his decision to administer justice,⁶¹ and the use of body imagery is another poetic device which makes the verse more vivid.⁶²

Verse 6

There is antithetical parallelism between lines 1 and 2,⁶³ thus:

| | |
|--|---|
| לֹא־יִחִיָּה רָשָׁע | 6 |
| b a | |
| וּמִשְׁפָּט עֲנִיִּים יִתֵּן: | |
| a' b' a' | |

59. Habel, *Job*, 497.

60. August H. Konkel, “Job,” in *Job, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs*, Cornerstone Biblical Commentary, ed. Philip W. Comfort (Carol Stream: Tyndale, 2006), 210.

61. Habel, *Job*, 497-498; Konkel, “Job,” 210.

62. Salisbury, *Biblical Hebrew Poetry*, 12.

63. Alden, *Job*, 349.

Thus we have a contrast between the evil person of line 1 and the afflicted person of line 2: respectively the one whom God does not keep alive in answer to Job's question of Job 21:7,⁶⁴ and the afflicted to whom God gives justice.

There is some rhyme at the ends of both lines in this verse, with the end of line 1 rhyming with the end of line 1 in verse 5 with the *qamatz* sound and the end of line 2 rhyming with the end of line 2 of verse 5 with the *tzere* sound. This helps to give verses 5 and 6 a pleasing sound and also helps provides cohesion between them as line 6 explains how the greatness (כְּבִיד) of God, who does not despise, acts justly towards both the evil and the afflicted.

Line 2 has the verb in the marked final position which provides variety from the standard order of line 1 as well as focusing on God's giving.

Verse 7

There is strong contrastive inter-verse parallelism between lines 1 of verses 6 and 7, with both lines following the same pattern of לא + imperfect verb + patient, thus:

| |
|--|
| לֹא-יַחֲיֶה רָשָׁע ⁶ |
| c b a |
| לֹא-יִגְרַע מִצְדִּיק עֵינָיו ⁷ |
| c' b' a |

This repetition of form heightens the contrast between the fate of the wicked and the righteous. Both lines are expressed as litotes,⁶⁵ which could possibly be another poetic effect as it would be simpler to express them positively. Interesting line 2 of verse 6 contrasts with line 1 of verse 6, whereas lines 2 and 3 of verse 7 amplify line 1 of that verse rather than contrast it.

64. William D. Reayburn, *A Handbook on Job*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1992), 659.

65. David J. A. Clines, *Job 21-37*, Word Biblical Commentary 18A (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2006), 857.

This end result of this is that only one line in the pericope focuses on the fate of the wicked (verse 6, line 1), while four lines focus on the fate of the afflicted righteous (verse 6, line 2, and verse 7, lines 1, 2 and 3), meaning that the focus is mostly on the fate of the righteous rather than the unrighteous.

There is some alliteration with the ענ sound between the similarly sounding עֲנִיִּים of line 2 in verse 6 and עֲנִיִּי of line 1 in verse 7. This alliteration serves to give a pleasing effect as well as providing cohesion.⁶⁶

Lines 2 and 3 expand on line 1 and together lines 2 and 3 are strongly parallel, although it would be difficult to diagram this as it is more a parallelism of concepts rather than words. In line 2, God places the righteous with kings on a throne and in line 3 he places them on high forever. While it is not possible to match word for word between the lines, the concepts are similar: God lifts the afflicted, poor, righteous person to a supremely exalted position, a theme found in the Wisdom Literature and elsewhere.⁶⁷

Line 2 lacks a verb (while line 3 has two verbs), which confounds some commentators,⁶⁸ but it need not, as verbal ellipsis is a characteristic of Hebrew poetry. It is quite clear from context by the use of לְבָסָא, that if a verb needs to be supplied, it should be something that places the righteous on that throne, as the ESV does with “on the throne he sets them,” the NIV with “he enthrones them” and the NLT with “he sets them on thrones”.

66. Salisbury, *Biblical Hebrew Poetry*, 16.

67. John E. Hartley, *The Book of Job*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 470.

68. See Rowley, *Job*, 228, who proffers various textual emendations in order to supply a verb.

Poetic translation of Job 36:5-7

- ⁵ Surely mighty is God,
Mighty in strength of heart
and not rejecting the innocent.
- ⁶ Not letting the wicked person live,
but giving a fair go to the battler.
- ⁷ Not taking his eyes off the good person
- setting them on thrones with kings!
- forever exalted on high!

As discussed, this pericope is not as obviously poetic as some of the other texts in this thesis, and hence in translation, some of the more standard features of English poetry, such as rhythm and rhyme, have not been used. A free-verse form has been employed, using various poetic and literary features to give the translation a poetic feel.

The pattern of אֵל + imperfect verb which appears once in each of the three verses has been replicated by a consistent pattern of “not” + participle in the English translation. This helps with cohesion across the pericope as well as given a pleasing effect.

This translation has only one finite verb (“is”) in line 1 of verse 5, with the remainder of the verbs being subordinate participles. This helps to provide cohesion to the whole pericope and draw attention to God, the primary agent throughout these three verses.

Verse 5

I was not able to find a suitably rare English word to match the Hebrew כִּבִּיר, however I have attempted to replicate the focus this might give by placing the first use of “mighty” as the predicate in the non-standard primary position, “mighty is God.”

Some restructuring of verse 5 has taken place in order to follow more natural English discourse. “Not rejecting the innocent” has been moved from the middle of the verse to the end. As well as being more natural in English, this also serves to place both uses of “mighty” early in their respective sentences, thus strengthening the impact of the repetition of these words.

As discussed, in the Hebrew, סָרַף! takes no object, however with “reject” being a transitive verb in English,⁶⁹ it would be overly awkward not to provide one in English. However, unlike our comparative translations which have provided “anyone” or a semantic equivalent, I have followed the Septuagint’s ἄκακον and supplied “innocent.”

The metaphorical לֵב כֹּחַ has been retained as “strength of heart.” No doubt this may not be as easy to understand as the ESV’s “strength of understanding,” the NIV’s “firm in his purpose” or the NLT’s “in both power and understanding,” however it retains the vividness of using body imagery. For a similar reason, the verb ellipsis of the original has been retained in translation.

Verse 6

The antithetical parallelism between lines 1 and 2 has been retained and in English it is necessary to show the antithesis more clearly than in Hebrew, and this has been done by the use of the adversative “but” at the beginning of line 2.

69. *Macquarie Essential Dictionary: Australia’s National Dictionary* (Macquarie University: Macquarie, 1999), 665.

As mentioned, the Hebrew has some rhyme between this verse and the preceding one, and unfortunately I have not been able to replicate that, nor replicate the effect of the verb final ending of line 2.

Line 2 uses two distinctly Australian terms: “fair go” and “battler.” In Australian English, a battler is a “conscientious worker, especially one living at subsistence level,”⁷⁰ and is the closest term I can think of that comes close to the Hebrew concept of the עֲבָדִי and that most of my respondents will readily understand. “Fair go” means “an appeal for fairness or reason,”⁷¹ and is close in meaning to the Hebrew concept of מִשְׁפָּט. I do not anticipate the use of these Australianisms to be an issue as I expect the vast majority of the survey respondents to be Australian. However, in the case of testing of this translation, it may be necessary to isolate Non-Australian respondents when the results of the survey are analysed.

Verse 7

The litotes pattern of לֹא + imperfect verb + patient in both line 1s of verses 6 and 7 is replicated with “Not” + participle + patient in the English translation.

The strong conceptual parallelism of lines 2 and 3 as expansions of line 1 has been retained by the use of dashes to commence both lines 2 and 3 and the use of a similar dependent clause pattern in both lines 2 and 3 which are both grammatically subordinate to line 1. In line 2, this subordination is achieved with a participle and in line 3 with a verb-less clause, which is opposite to the Hebrew which has no verbs in line 2 and two in line 3. However the effect is similar, and having one of the clauses as verb-less helps to add to the vitality of the passage.

70. *Macquarie Essential Dictionary*, 61.

71. *Macquarie Essential Dictionary*, 278.

Translation Approach

A mixture of Holmes's first and second approach has been used in translating this passage.⁷² Some features have been directly carried over in translation, such as replication of the לֹא clauses as "not" clauses, replication of body imagery with a literal translation of לֵב as "strength of heart" and the retention of the antithetical parallelism in verse 6. On the other hand, other poetic features have not been replicated but replaced with different features performing similar functions, such as sentence position focus in lieu of a rare word in verse 5, the restructuring of verse 5, and the use of formatting markers in verse 7 in the English translation to heighten the conceptual parallelism in that verse.

Ecclesiastes 10:1-3

- 1 As dead flies give perfume a bad smell,
so a little folly outweighs wisdom and honour.
- 2 The heart of the wise inclines to the right,
but the heart of the fool to the left.
- 3 Even as fools walk along the road,
they lack sense
and show everyone how stupid they are. (NIV)

¹ זְבוּבֵי מוֹת יִבְאִישׁ יִבְיַע שֶׁמֶן רוֹקַח
יֶקֶר מִחֲכָמָה מִכְבוֹד סְכָלוֹת מַעֵט:
² לֵב חָכָם לִימִינוֹ
וְלֵב כְּסִיל לְשִׁמְאֹלוֹ:

72. Holmes, "Forms of Verse Translation," 95-96.

וְגַם-בִּדְרֹךְ כְּשֶׁכֶּל הַלֵּךְ לְבוֹ חֵסֶר³ וְאָמַר לְכָל סֶכֶל הוּא:

Selection of Ecclesiastes 10:1-3

Chapter 10 is a fair way into the book, and *Knowing Jesus* ranks Ecclesiastes 10:1 at 116 out of 222 verses in the book, verse 2 at 210 and verse 3 at 150.⁷³ On the *Top Verses* website, a visual inspection of their Ecclesiastes page puts all three verses in the bottom half of popularity within Ecclesiastes, and specifically out of all the verses in the Bible, Ecclesiastes 10:1 is ranked at 9,264, verse 2 at 15,979 and verse 3 at 11,959.⁷⁴ Overall, these verses' lack of popularity should help mitigate familiarity bias.

The verses chosen are brief and although there are various ways the boundaries of the section within which it lies can be drawn,⁷⁵ the three verses themselves can be read as a self-contained unit. It does not contain any controversial or foreign themes, interpretations or terms. In most Bibles, verse 4 is also included in this pericope, however this verse does contain the term for a military post, which is slightly unfamiliar for many modern English speakers. It is not necessary for the pericope to include verse 4 in order for the meaning of the remaining verses to be clear and therefore, to avoid the unfamiliar terminology of verse 4, it has not been included for the purpose of this exercise.

Ecclesiastes moves from sections that are more prosaic to more poetic and back again. Ecclesiastes 10:1-3 is one of the more poetic sections, therefore it is a good selection for the purpose of this thesis.

73. Knowing Jesus, "Most Popular Verses in Ecclesiastes 10," Knowing Jesus, <https://bible.knowing-jesus.com/popular/Ecclesiastes/10> (accessed January 25, 2019).

74. [Chapman?], "Welcome to Top Verses."

75. Jerry E. Shepherd, "Ecclesiastes," in *Proverbs ~ Isaiah*, rev. ed., Expositor's Bible Commentary 6, ed. Tremper Longman III and David E. Garland (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008), 341.

Poetic exegesis of Ecclesiastes 10:1-3

Ecclesiastes 10:1-3 is found towards the end of the book in a section regarding wisdom, and in keeping with the general theme of the book, focuses on the futility of wisdom as all its advantages are undone by the presence of even a little folly.⁷⁶

The divisions between the material of chapter 10 are difficult to determine and are in many ways connected without break to the material in the preceding chapter.⁷⁷ Our three verses, however, can be read cohesively as a single unit with a single theme, which is that folly spoils any advantage that wisdom gains. There are three cognate links found within the three verses. לֵב (heart) is found three times in the passage; twice in verse 2 and once in verse 3.⁷⁸ חָכְמָה (wisdom) and חָכָם (wise person) appear once each in verses 1 and 2, but the strongest linkage is with סָכָלוֹת (folly) / סָכָל found once in verse 1 and twice in verse 3 respectively and its similarly sounding and semantically similar cousin כָּסִיל found once in verse 2.⁷⁹

One challenge to both an exegesis and translation of this section is that the forms of each of the three verses are quite different to each other, as we shall see. It also might be better to see these verses not so much as a poem, but as poetically written.

76. Roland E. Murphy, *Ecclesiastes*, Word Biblical Commentary 23A (Dallas: Word, 1992), 99.

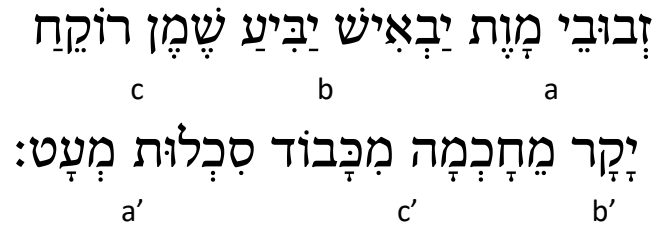
77. Graham S. Ogden and Lynell Zogbo, *A Handbook on Ecclesiastes*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1997), 355, note that our unit expands the theme from the previous chapter.

78. Ogden and Zogbo, *Ecclesiastes*, 359.

79. Note however, that Murphy, *Ecclesiastes*, 97, states, "The choice of the noun סָכָל is in deliberate contrast with כָּסִיל in v 2," although he translates them both as "wise."

Verse 1

The two lines of verse 1 form an emblematic parallel structure, with the first line giving the metaphor and the second the real world explanation.⁸⁰ Most of the parallel elements in this verse are word pairs rather than isolated words and in the following diagram word pairs are identified by placing the marking letter between the words of the word pair thus:



Thus the metaphorical noun adjective pair זָבוּבֵי מוֹת (dead flies)⁸¹ of line 1 corresponds with the סְכָלוֹת מְעַט (little folly) of line 2, and so on.

Asyndeton features twice in this verse, once in each line, and this has led to much discussion among the commentators including suggested textual emendations. However, understanding that asyndeton is a poetic feature obviates the need for some of these explanations.⁸² The first asyndeton is between the two verbs יִבְאִישׁ and יִבִּיעַ in line 1 and this has led some commentators to query the originality of the second verb.⁸³ However, it should be noted that the use of these two *hiphil* imperfect verbs next to each other without a connecting *vav* gives a common sound pattern of יִב (at least for the Hebrew ear if not ours, as they

80. Tremper Longman III, *The Book of Ecclesiastes*, New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 239.

81. There is some conjecture as to whether this construction means dying flies, flies that cause death (that is, poisonous flies), or dead flies, however the last sense seems to make most sense (So Ogden and Zogbo, *Ecclesiastes*, 356; Murphy, *Ecclesiastes*, 97; and Longman, *Ecclesiastes*, 238), and is followed by the comparative translations used in this thesis.

82. Lee M. Fields, *Hebrew for the Rest of Us: Using Hebrew Tools without Mastering Biblical Hebrew* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008), 81.

83. Murphy, *Ecclesiastes*, 97, suggests that the second verb is doubtful and might be a gloss or a case of dittography.

interpreted the ב and ב sounds as being similar).⁸⁴ Together with the initial word this provides a striking ב / ב alliteration thus: זְבוּבֵי מוֹת יִבְאִישׁ יִבְיַע שָׁמֶן רוֹקֵחַ.

The second case of asyndeton appears in the second line with the two preposition + noun units of מִחֲכָמָה and מִכְבוֹד and again, the second element of מִכְבוֹד has led to much speculation as it is hard to see how כְּבוֹד pairs semantically with חֲכָמָה. One possible solution is to read them as a hendiadys with מִכְבוֹד adjectivally modifying חֲכָמָה, giving a meaning of something like, “great wisdom.”⁸⁵

Line 1 has the subject in the marked initial position drawing our attention to the dead flies whose parallel of a little folly is at the other extremity of the verse.⁸⁶

Verse 2

The shortness of verse 2 stands in contrast to the length of verse 1. Verse 2 is a very compact, verb-less, tightly antithetically paralleled proverb,⁸⁷ which can be diagrammed thus:

| | | |
|-------|---------|---------------|
| לֵב | חָכָם | לִימִינוּ |
| c | b | a |
| וְלֵב | כְּסִיל | לְשֹׁמְאָלוֹ: |
| c' | b' | a' |

A compact form, helped by ellipsis of verbs in both lines, gives this verse a short, punchy ring. The use of the third person masculine pronoun on the final nouns in each line also gives the end of each line a pleasing rhyming i (*holam*) sound.

84. Ogden and Zogbo, *Ecclesiastes*, 356, suggest that the use of two verbs that sound alike was probably intentional.

85. Ogden and Zogbo, *Ecclesiastes*, 357; Murphy, *Ecclesiastes*, 97.

86. Ogden and Zogbo, *Ecclesiastes*, 358, note a slightly chiasmic structure here.

87. Longman, *Ecclesiastes*, 240.

There is strong use of imagery throughout this verse. We have the body imagery of לֵב to express the personality of a person, which was a common way to do so in Hebrew.⁸⁸ The directions of right and left have more symbolic meaning than in English. In English, they could either denote different directions or different political persuasions,⁸⁹ neither of which were the intended meanings of the original. The right direction was right not just in direction but also right in conduct,⁹⁰ which probably used to be true in English as well since the word “right” is the same for both senses. “Left” may or may not have had a negative meaning by itself,⁹¹ but in the context as the opposite of the positive right way, it would have been understood negatively.⁹²

Verse 3

Verse 3 is different again to the preceding three verses and is the least poetic of the three, if it could be regarded as poetic at all. It is best understood as an elaboration of line 2 of verse 2, in that it describes the non-right path that the fool of verse 2 takes.⁹³ It’s main poetic features are the use of the similar words of לֵב and סֶכֶל which bind it to the previous verse, however these features are also found in prose.

88. Andrew Bowling, “לֵב (lābab),” in *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, ed. R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer Jr., and Bruce K. Waltke (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), 466.

89. Ogden and Zogbo, *Ecclesiastes*, 358.

90. Ogden and Zogbo, *Ecclesiastes*, 358.

91. Ogden and Zogbo, *Ecclesiastes*, 358, argue that in the Old Testament, “left” refers to what is wrong, misguided or weak, Murphy, *Ecclesiastes*, 100, that the left leads to disaster, Garrett, *Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs*, 335, that right and left respectively refer to skilful and inept behaviour, and Thomas Krüger, *Qoheleth: A Commentary*, trans. O. C. Dean Jr., Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2004), 180, that right and left respectively refer to good luck and misfortune, however Shepherd, “Ecclesiastes,” 342, notes that there are no clear instances in biblical Hebrew in which “left” refers to evil.

92. Longman, *Ecclesiastes*, 240.

93. Longman, *Ecclesiastes*, 240; Ogden and Zogbo, *Ecclesiastes*, 359.

There is a small textual issue with the word כְּשֶׁהָסֶכֶל having a *qere* reading of כְּשֶׁסֶכֶל. The only difference is the omission of the article ה in the *qere* reading and this has no material impact on either exegesis or translation.⁹⁴

Poetic Translation of Ecclesiastes 10:1-3

- ¹ As a dead fly a perfumer's perfume putrefies,
great wisdom by a little folly is minimised.
- ² The heart of the wise to the right,
The heart of the fool to the wrong.
- ³ Even as he goes on his way,
the fool, with a senseless heart,
announces to all, "I am a fool."

The morphological links discussed earlier which bind these verses together have been retained in translation with the use of "heart" for לֵב in verses 2 and 3, "wisdom" / "wise" for חֲכָמָה / חָכָם in verses 1 and 2, and "folly" / "fool" for סֶכֶל / כְּסִיל / סֶכֶל in verses 1, 2 and 3.

Verse 1

The emblematic parallel structure of the original is retained. Hebrew has no causal word linking the two lines, but in English this is necessary to avoid ambiguity, so an "as" has been used at the beginning of line 1. The "as" also helps to give ballast to the first line, so that both lines 1 and 2 have 13 syllables.

94. Murphy, *Ecclesiastes*, 97.

The emphatic function of the marked word order of subject in initial position in line 1 has been replicated in the English translation by a non-standard SOV word order.

Placing the verb last in line 1 also gives assonance, bordering on rhyme, to the final two syllables of both lines 1 and 2 with the common pattern of neuter vowel + consonant + long “i” + z of “putree(ə)fies” and “minii(ə)mised.” In the Hebrew, “flies” is in the plural yet its matching verbs are in the singular, thus making number ambiguous. This gives me a choice, and I have chosen to use the singular “fly” so that I can use the singular verb “putrefies” rather than the plural “putrefy,” and thus keep assonance with “minimised” in line 2.

The alliteration of the sound ב in יָבִיעַ נְשָׁמָן רוֹקֵחַ יָבִיעַ מֵוֶת יָבִיעַ had been replicated with alliteration using the “p” sound thus: As a dead fly a perfumer’s perfume putrefies. This gives the same effect of a pleasing sound in English as it does in Hebrew.

The pair of verbs in line 1 in the Hebrew, which act as a word pair giving much the same meaning, have been reduced to just one verb in the English. This is to help preserve the alliteration, assonance and rhythm as discussed above.

As discussed earlier, one possible solution to the two preposition + noun constructions of מִחֲכָמָה and מִכְבוֹד is to treat them as a hendiadys with the meaning of “great wisdom,” and I have translated accordingly.

Verse 2

Although not possible to achieve the brevity of the original Hebrew, I have translated verse 2 in a compact way, even to the point of retaining the ellipsis of verbs. The translation is quite literal, but should still be quite understandable to the English reader. The compactness should heighten poetic effect and make it more vivid.

The body imagery of the use of the word “heart” has been retained. The imagery of “right” and “left” has been modified to “right” and “wrong” for two reasons. The first is because while “right” does have the desired double meaning in English, “left” does not. The second is because that if any metaphorical reading is understood in English, it might be understood politically (right wing and left wing politics), something which is to be avoided.

The end-rhyme of the two lines has not been retained however both lines have the same number of syllables, achieving a similar pleasing poetic effect.

Verse 3

Verse 3 is the least poetic of the three verses in the Hebrew, and so it is also the least poetic in translation. Nevertheless, it is formatted poetically and there is some assonance with a threefold repetition of the “ool” / “all” sound family, thus:

Even as he goes on his way
the fool, with a senseless heart,
announces to all, “I am a fool.”

Translation Approach

This translation for the most part follows Holmes’s first approach as most of the form and features of the original have been able to be carried over into translation, such as repetition of morphological links, the emblematic parallel structure in verse 1, unusual word order in verse 1, ellipsis of the verbs in verse 2, retention of body imagery in verse 2 and alliteration and assonance throughout.⁹⁵ Although we might expect that such a high degree of conformity to the structure of the original would give the translation a strong foreignising feel, this has not

95. Holmes, “Forms of Verse Translation,” 95.

occurred because in this particular case there has been strong matching between Hebrew and English poetic forms. Nevertheless, it will be interesting to see how well survey participants accept this translation.

Lamentations 3:52-54

⁵² Those who were my enemies without cause
hunted me like a bird.

⁵³ They tried to end my life in a pit
and threw stones at me;

⁵⁴ the waters closed over my head,
and I thought I was about to perish. (NIV)

⁵² צֹד צְדוֹנִי כַּצֶּפֶר

אִיְבֵי חֵנֶם:

⁵³ צָמְתוּ בַּבּוֹר חַיִּי

וַיִּדּוּ-אֶבֶן בִּי:

⁵⁴ צָפוּ-מַיִם עַל-רֹאשִׁי

אֲמַרְתִּי נִגְזַרְתִּי: ס

Selection of Lamentations 3:52-54

According to survey results conducted by the British and Foreign Bible Society, Lamentations is one of the five least favourite books of the Bible.⁹⁶ Within Lamentations, according to both the *Knowing Jesus* and the *Top Verses* websites, the end of chapter 3 is the least popular part of Lamentations, with verse 52 ranking 137 out of 154 on the *Knowing Jesus* website, verse 53 at 143, and verse 54 at 148.⁹⁷ The *Top Verses* website shows this pericope amongst the least popular in the whole Bible for its users: verse 52 ranks at 28,301, verse 53 at 29,125 and verse 54 at 29,823 out of around the 31,000 total number of verses in the Bible.⁹⁸ Therefore, the risks of familiarity bias with this passage of Scripture should be very low.

This particular pericope was chosen because unlike some of the ones surrounding it, it contains references to material objects, such as a bird, a pit (or reservoir), stones (or a lid), and flooding water, that should be somewhat familiar to the modern English speaking reader.

Poetic Exegesis of Lamentations 3:52-54

Acrostic pattern

The outstanding poetic feature of our passage is the use of an acrostic pattern in which each verse or group of verses begins with sequential letters of the alphabet.⁹⁹ Indeed, all except the last chapter of Lamentations are constructed acrostically with chapter 3 having the strongest such pattern. In chapter 3, each stanza has 3 verses (or bicola) with 2 lines (or cola) each, and each verse within each stanza begins with the same letter of the Hebrew alphabet.

96. British and Foreign Bible Society, "You and Your Bible," British and Foreign Bible Society, <https://www.biblesociety.org.uk/get-involved/you-and-your-bible/> (accessed January 25, 2019).

97. Knowing Jesus, "Most Popular Verses in Lamentations 3," Knowing Jesus, <https://bible.knowing-jesus.com/popular/Lamentations/3> (accessed January 25, 2019).

98. [Chapman?], "Welcome to Top Verses."

99. F. B. Huey Jr., *Jeremiah, Lamentations*, New American Commentary 16 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1993), 445.

Since the Hebrew alphabet contains 22 letters, this gives Lamentations 3 a total of 66 verses. In our pericope, each verse begins with the letter *Tsade* ז.

There exists some uncertainty as to the reasons and functions of acrostic poetry in the Hebrew Bible, however most scholars believe that its main functions were probably to aid memory as a mnemonic aid, to give a sense of completeness and to demonstrate artistic skill.¹⁰⁰

As a mnemonic aid, there is some disagreement about whether this was a visual aid for the written form or an aural aid for the verbal form. Watson contends that it was useful for the written form only,¹⁰¹ and certainly some stanzas in chapter 3, while beginning with the same letter, begin with a different sound. For example, while verses 1-3 all begin with aleph א, the initial sounds are all different (shva, “o” and “a” respectively),¹⁰² and in verses 61-63, while all begin with ש, verses 61 and 63 begin with the “sh” ש sound and verse 62 begins with the “s” ש sound. In contrast to Watson, Wendland asserts the main impact of an acrostic poem would have been on the aural listener rather than the reader of a print version. He believes it likely that a lector would have emphasised the first word containing the acrostic letter of each verse.¹⁰³ Again looking at Lamentations 3, although one can point out exceptions with letters such as א and ש, overall the aural effect would have been quite consistently evident to a

100. Peter C. Craigie and Marvin E. Tate, *Psalms 1-50*, Word Biblical Commentary 19 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2004), 129; Robin Parry, *Lamentations* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 14.

101. Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry*, 191, 198.

102. Of course, this assumes that initial א (*aleph*) was silent. We cannot just assume that it was always silent, as many modern Hebrew primers, such as Gary D. Pratico and Miles V. Van Pelt (*Basics of Biblical Hebrew Grammar*, 2nd ed. [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007], 2), tell us. Christo H. J. van der Merwe, Jackie A. Naudé and Jan H. Kroeze (*A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*, Biblical Languages: Hebrew 3 [Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999], 25), state it was silent at the beginning and end of a word and Angel Sáenz-Badillos (*A History of the Hebrew Language*, trans. John Elwolde [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993], 137-138), notes that by the time of the Second Temple period, pronunciation of laryngeals was weakening or disappearing. Therefore we cannot be sure if the initial readers of Lamentations heard some weak glottal stop or the associated vowel as the first sound in verses 1-3.

103. Ernst R. Wendland, *Lovely, Lively Lyrics: Selected Studies in Biblical Hebrew Verse* (Dallas: SIL, 2013), 111.

listener. Even with the exception letters, ׀ and ׀ sound very similar, and the uniting feature of words beginning with ׀ is the vowel sound.

As an aid to give a sense of completeness, the use of acrostics in Lamentations gives the book a sense of the utter sense of destruction, although in chapter 3 we do note a more hopeful turn in the latter part of the chapter.¹⁰⁴ Within each stanza, the use of a common letter also gives the sense of coverage of a distinct theme, which in verses 52-54 is that of entrapment.

The author of Lamentations 3 shows considerable artistic skill by his use of an acrostic pattern as well as his use of other poetic devices.

Metre

As discussed in the previous chapter, the use of metre in Biblical Hebrew poetry is contentious, but Lamentations is one area where its use may be clearer.¹⁰⁵ Many scholars argue that the verses in Lamentations generally follow a *qinah* metre, either of stressed accents¹⁰⁶ or by word count,¹⁰⁷ of 3:2 between lines 1 and 2 of each verse. Such a metre, in which the second line is shorter than the first, was often used as a dirge, as it gives a sense of limping and fading away,¹⁰⁸ giving a mournful sound to those who heard it.¹⁰⁹ Although in practice an exact 3:2 metre does not always apply consistently to Lamentations 3, it is quite clear that lines 2 of each verse are slightly shorter than lines 1,¹¹⁰ and that in general all lines 1 are of about the same

104. Parry, *Lamentations*, 14.

105. Paul R. House, "Lamentations," in *Song of Songs, Lamentations*, Word Biblical Commentary 23B, ed. Bruce M. Metzger, David A. Hubbard and Glenn W. Barker (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2004), 308.

106. So William H. Shea, "The *qinah* Structure of the Book of Lamentations," *Biblica* 60 no. 1 (1979): 103; Huey, 444.

107. So House, 308.

108. Paul W. Ferris Jr., "Lamentations," in *Jeremiah ~ Ezekiel*, rev. ed., Expositor's Bible Commentary 7, ed. Tremper Longman III and David E. Garland (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 578.

109. Huey, *Jeremiah, Lamentations*, 444.

110. House, "Lamentations," 309.

length, as are all lines 2. Thus, even though the pattern may not be strictly 3:2, the dirge-like effect of a slightly shorter line 2 is clearly evident.

Other features

The author of Lamentations makes good use of alliteration and assonance, which is often a feature of acrostic poetry.¹¹¹ In fact, in our stanza, each verse has one marked theme sound (צ in verse 52, ב in verse 53 and י in verse 54), which helps with intra-verse cohesion.

Unlike many other sections of Hebrew poetry, word order in Lamentations is fairly standard with the verb usually appearing in initial position.¹¹² Our passage is no exception, with every line that has a verb placing it in initial position. In some ways this makes the artistic skill of the author even more impressive, in that he managed to stick to an acrostic pattern, with a *qinah* metre, without resorting to moving verbs around the sentence in order to do so.

Verse 52

The stanza commences with the emphatic infinitive absolute + finite verb structure of צֹדֶם צֹדֶם ("hunting they hunted me") which sets the theme of entrapment for the whole stanza.

We do notice line 2 is slightly shorter than line 1 (and in this particular verse follows exactly the 3:2 pattern by word count), thus conforming to the *qinah* metre. The other verses also follow the pattern of line 2 being slightly shorter than line 1, although not in an exact 3:2 pattern.

There is word initial alliteration in line 1 with the צ sound repeated three times, which gives cohesion, thus: צֹדֶם צֹדֶם צֹדֶם.¹¹³

111. Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry*, 196.

112. House, "Lamentations," 309.

113. Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry*, 200, 226.

Line 1 contains a metaphor in which the author compares himself to a bird being hunted, a common image in lament literature.¹¹⁴

Verse 53

Lines 1 and 2 are parallel with each other thus:

| | | | |
|-----------------|----------|--------|---|
| צִמְתּוֹ | בַּבּוֹר | חַיִּי | |
| | c | b | a |
| וַיִּדְוּ-אֶבֶן | בֵּי: | | |
| c' | b' | a' | |

There are two ways that this parallel structure can be interpreted. The first is that each line describes two different types of actions: firstly they tried to put an end to him by throwing him in a pit, and then they threw stones at him. This is the way our comparative translations have understood and translated line 2. However, a deeper understanding of the background of these words helps us to see that both lines actually refer to the same event. The “pit” בּוֹר of line 1 is actually a water cistern, which when not in use could be used as convenient place to put one’s enemies in the hope they would die there.¹¹⁵ After placing someone in a cistern, a stone would be placed over its entrance to prevent escape.¹¹⁶ אֶבֶן (“stone”) in line 2 is singular, suggesting that indeed it was the one stone placed over the author when covering the cistern, rather than many stones thrown at him.¹¹⁷

114. William D. Reayburn and Euan McG. Fry, *A Handbook on Lamentations*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1992), 99.

115. Paul W. Ferris, Jr, “Lamentations,” in *Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel*, Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary 4, ed. John H. Walton (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009), 388-389.

116. Huey, *Jeremiah, Lamentations*, 478.

117. Reayburn and Fry, *Lamentations*, 99-100.

This verse also contains alliteration, this time in the form of the repeated ב / ב sound, which as in verse 1, helps with intra-verse cohesion:

צִמְתּוֹ בַּבּוֹר חַיִּי
וַיִּדּוּ-אֶבֶן בִּי:

The action of being thrown into a cistern may or may not be metaphorical. Jeremiah (who may be the author) was indeed thrown into a cistern in Jeremiah 38:6. However, it could be a metaphorical description of the hopeless sufferings of the Israelite people.¹¹⁸ Being trapped in a pit was often used in the Bible as a symbol for death,¹¹⁹ and so it seems to the author that his nation has been buried.¹²⁰

Verse 54

The picture of being trapped in a closed up cistern continues in this verse, as water now enters the cistern and threatens to drown the author.¹²¹

There is rhyme at the end of each line with the ה (hireq) sound, and in fact this rhyme continues from line 2 of the previous verse, thus:

וַיִּדּוּ-אֶבֶן בִּי:
צָפוּ-מַיִם עַל-רֹאשִׁי⁵⁴
אִמְרָתִי נִגְזְרָתִי:

118. Huey, *Jeremiah, Lamentations*, 478, offers both alternatives.

119. Parry, *Lamentations*, 120.

120. R. K. Harrison, *Jeremiah and Lamentations: An Introduction and Commentary*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1973), 230.

121. Parry, *Lamentations*, 120.

This rhyme helps to give continuity between line 2 of verse 53 and verse 54 and exegetically informs us that being covered with water in verse 54 was most likely related to being in the cistern of verse 53 and not a separate event.

Poetic Translation of Lamentations 3:52-54

52 **Stalking me as a snared bird**
 - for no reason.

53 **Silencing me in a rock-carved reservoir,**
 closing its lid on me.

54 **Sloshing water over my head I cry,**
 “It’s the end of me!”

When translating acrostic poetry, the translator has four options.

Firstly, she can ignore the acrostic completely, both in translation as well as in paratextual helps. All three of our comparative translations have taken this approach with Lamentations 3 and there are no hints given in the text or the formatting that in the Hebrew this is acrostic.

The second approach is to ignore the acrostic in translation, but to give some information in the form of paratextual information and formatting that the original was acrostic. This is what the *Christian Standard Bible* has done by marking the beginning of each stanza with a heading which gives the letter for that stanza. For example, the first three verses of chapter 3 have the heading, “א Aleph,” and so on until “ת Taw” at the end.

The third approach is not to seek to replicate the form of a Hebrew acrostic poem into the receptor language, but to find an equivalent form in the receptor language which has a

similar function.¹²² For example, in the Spanish version *Biblia en Lenguaje Sencillo*, Lamentations 3 is translated not by an acrostic in alphabetic order, which is unfamiliar to Spanish speakers, but by an acrostic which spells out an encoded message, which is a poetic feature familiar to Spanish speakers.¹²³

The fourth method, and the one I have employed, is to replicate the alphabetical form of the acrostic into the receptor language. This is not impossible and various attempts have been made at doing this including Timothy Wilt's translation of Psalm 111 into English,¹²⁴ and Roelie van der Spuy's translation of Psalms 111 and 145 into Afrikaans.¹²⁵ Van der Spuy notes that the original authors exerted a great deal of effort in writing their poems in the acrostic structure. This effort would suggest that the acrostic form was very important and we are therefore missing out a great deal if we ignore it in translation.¹²⁶ In defence of the charge that trying to force an acrostic structure on a receptor language can result in occasional awkward or stylistically unusual patterns, Wilt notes that the same is actually true in the original Hebrew as well.¹²⁷ For these reasons I have chosen to use an alphabetic acrostic structure in my translation, replicating as close as possible the form of the original.

One limiting factor of this exercise is that my translation only covers one stanza of Lamentations 3, and ordinarily, a reader would read the whole poem and not just one stanza. In this case, I have translated on the assumption that verses 52-54 are a part of a greater whole, even though for the purpose of this thesis's survey they are not. This means that I have not arbitrarily assigned a particular letter to verses 52-54, but have given it the letter it would have

122. Alfredo Tepox, "Translating Acrostics as Acrostics," *The Bible Translator* 55, no. 2 (April 2004): 236.

123. Tepox, "Acrostics," 240. In this case the acrostic of Lamentations 3 spells out, "Yo Soy El Seirvo Sufriente," which means, "I am the Suffering Servant."

124. Timothy Lloyd Wilt, "Alphabet Acrostics: Perhaps the Form Can Be Represented," *The Bible Translator* 44, no. 2 (April 1993): 211.

125. Roelie van der Spuy, "Hebrew Alphabetic Acrostics – Significance and Translation," in *Old Testament Essays* 21, no. 2 (2008): 527-530.

126. Van der Spuy, "Acrostics," 515.

127. Wilt, "Acrostics," 208.

had as if I had translated the whole of chapter 3. This presents a difficulty, because while the English alphabet has 26 letters, the Hebrew one only had 22, meaning there is no exact correspondence. Various methods could be used to resolve this difficulty, but the one I have chosen is to exclude the four letters of the English alphabet that have the least number of words starting with them. According to a page count of the *Macquarie Essential Dictionary*, the letters *q*, *x*, *y* and *z* are the rarest letters that begin a word in the English language.¹²⁸ This means that *tsade* צ, the 18th letter of the Hebrew alphabet, corresponds to the letter *s* in English. In English, the letter *s* can be used to start words beginning with the phonetic sound “s” or “sh”. We have seen that Hebrew mixes the “s” and “sh” sounds in the *sin/shin* ש stanza, but because most other stanzas have a consistent sound, this small exception would not have been very significant for the original listeners. Likewise, if I had translated all of Lamentations 3, I would feel justified in mixing the “s” and “sh” sounds, but because only one stanza has been translated in this exercise, I have limited myself to only choosing words with the “s” sound.

In order to make the acrostic clearer, I have used bold font for the initial *s* in each verse, as well as capitalising. Lines 2, which do not begin with an *s*, are indented so that the lines beginning with *s* are more prominent.

I have attempted to replicate the effect of the *qinah* metre with a shorter line 2 in each verse, and I think this does have a similar effect in English of the poem fading away.

One difficulty I faced was with the verbs. Hebrew has the advantage of pronominal suffixes which do not interfere with initial letter choice, but English requires a subject, which in our case would have been “they,” which would have destroyed any attempts at an acrostic rendering. To overcome this, almost all verbs are participles. The only finite verb (apart from in the exclamation at the end) is “cry” at the end of line 1 in verse 54. From a grammatical point of

128. In the *Macquarie Essential Dictionary*, “Q” has only 5 pages of entries, “X” 1 page, and “Y” and “Z” 3 pages each.

view the rest of the stanza is dependent on this final finite verb, and it is unusual to do this in English. However, this unusual construction actually serves to heighten the poetic nature of the text.

Verse 52

Finding a word starting with *s* to translate צוד (to hunt) was a challenge, but “stalking” comes close, and the addition of “snared” in front of “bird” clarifies that the stalking was for the purpose of catching the bird. Adding “snared” also clarifies to the English reader why a bird is chased, as most English-speakers do not catch wild birds as game food. Using two words related to hunting (“stalking” and “snared”) also seeks to replicate the effect of the infinitive absolute plus finite verb in the Hebrew.

Preserving the *qinah* metre meant keeping line 2 short, and this meant dropping a translation for the word אֹיְבֵי (my enemies). It should be clear from the context however, that whoever is trying to kill the author is his enemy.

The alliteration of the *צ* sound in line 1 of verse 52 has been replicated with an “*s*” sound alliteration in translation, thus: “Stalking me as a snared bird.”

Verse 53

צמַת is translated in various ways in the English, but I took advantage of its root meaning of silencing in a permanent way,¹²⁹ because the English word “silencing” begins with an *s*. In English, “silencing” can also have this meaning of permanently silencing someone by killing him.

Cisterns are unfamiliar to modern English-speakers, so I have used the term “rock-carved reservoir” to describe a cistern in easily understandable language. This term also has the

129. John N. Oswalt, “צַמַת (ṣāmat),” in *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*, ed. Willem A. VanGemeren (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997), 3:819.

advantage of replicating the כ / ב alliteration of the Hebrew with a “r” sound alliteration in the English, which would be thus for non-rhotic English speakers (such as Australians and most English): “Silencing me in a rock-carved reservoir.” This alliteration would be even more enhanced for rhotic English speakers (such as most Americans and Irish): “Silencing me in a rock-carved reservoir.”

Of the two possible ways of interpreting line 2 which have already been discussed, I chose the option that אָבֶן refers to the covering of the cistern, and it has therefore been translated as “lid.”

Verse 54

“Sloshing” is a good equivalent for צֹף, especially as the rest of the line makes it clear that the water is rising up over author’s head.

I have translated אֶמְרֵי with “I cry” and moved it from line 2 to line 1, so that the *qinah* metre with its shorter line 2 is preserved. This is especially important on the concluding line of the stanza.

Lines 2 of verses 53 and 54 both end with “me,” replicating the rhyme of the original and helping with intra-verse cohesion.

Translation Approach

In terms of the underlying structure, this translation conforms to Holmes’s first approach as both the acrostic structure as well as an approximation of the *qinah* metre have been preserved.¹³⁰ In addition, much of the intra-verse alliteration has also been preserved. Both acrostics and the *qinah* metre are quite foreign to English speakers and so the translation

130. Holmes, “Forms of Verse Translation,” 95.

of this Scripture passage is probably the most foreignising of all the passages used in this thesis, and it will be interesting to see how this is reflected in the survey results.

Song of Songs 7:6-9a

⁶ How beautiful you are and how pleasing,

my love, with your delights!

⁷ Your stature is like that of the palm,

and your breasts like clusters of fruit.

⁸ I said, "I will climb the palm tree;

I will take hold of its fruit."

May your breasts be like clusters of grapes on the vine,

the fragrance of your breath like apples,

⁹ and your mouth like the best wine. (NIV)

⁷ מַה־יְפִית וּמַה־נְּעִמָּה

אַהֲבָה בַּתְּעֲנוּגִים:

⁸ זֹאת קוֹמַתְךָ דְּמַתָּה לְתָמָר

וְשִׁדְיֶךָ לְאַשְׁכְּלוֹת:

⁹ אִמַּרְתִּי אֶעֱלֶה בְּתָמָר

אֲחֻזָּה בְּסִנְסִנִּי

וְיִהְיוּ־נָא שִׁדְיֶךָ כְּאַשְׁכְּלוֹת הַגֶּפֶן

וְרִיחַ אִפְךָ כִּתְפוּחִים:

¹⁰ וְחִכְךָ כִּיֵּין הַטּוֹב

Selection of Song of Songs 7:6-9a

The Song of Songs is a beautifully passionate poem or song about two lovers praising each other. Although very poetic, it contains many illusions which do not make much sense for the modern person, such as the man comparing his lover's hair to a flock of goats (Song of Songs 6:5) or teeth to a flock of ewes (Song of Songs 6:6). Song of Songs 7:6-9a, however, contains illusions that while possibly not the most natural ones a modern person would use, are still understandable.

The passage chosen is a self-contained unit that should be able to be understood on its own. It is a little longer than the other pericopes used in this thesis, however the passionate nature of the text may serve to hold the reader's attention for longer!

In terms of popularity, in a survey conducted by the British and Foreign Bible Society, Song of Songs was one of the five least favourite books.¹³¹ On the *Knowing Jesus* website, out of 117 verses in Song of Songs, Song of Songs 7:6 ranks 102nd, verse 7 at 115th, verse 8 at 22nd and verse 9 at 46th. Strangely, the first half of the pericope is not very popular, while the last part is somewhat more so. The statistics at *Top Verses* correspond with this, ranking verse 6 at 20,497 out of the whole Bible, verse 7 at 22,152, verse 8 at 6,280 and verse 9 at 8,267.¹³² However, even though verse 8 and to a lesser extent, verse 9, are reasonably popular within the Song of Songs, they are still not greatly popular within the whole Bible so the effect of familiarity bias should still be low.

Poetic Exegesis of Song of Songs 7:6-9a

This passage is towards the end of the love poem between the man and the woman in the Song of Songs. Many theories abound as to the background of the book and our pericope's

131. British and Foreign Bible Society, "You and Your Bible."

132. [Chapman?], "Welcome to Top Verses."

place in it, but commentators and translations are in agreement that it is part of the man's love song to his beloved and many suggest that verse 6 commences a new section.¹³³ Commentators do disagree as to whether all of verse 9 is part of the man's speech or if it is divided between the man and the woman.¹³⁴ For this reason, and because the comparative translations only ascribe the first part of verse 9 to the man, I will only include the first part of verse 9 in my translation.

The main poetic features used in this passage are evocative language, analogy and parallelism, with a strong focus on the man's desire for his lover's breasts.¹³⁵ Other poetic features are employed on a lesser scale and will be discussed verse by verse below.

Verse 6 (Verse 7 in Hebrew)

Verse 6 continues the praise the man has been giving his beloved in the preceding verses. He praises her with three almost synonymous words: *יָפִית*, *נְעֻמָּה* and *תַּעֲנוּגִים*.¹³⁶ The last two are somewhat rare, leading to some uncertainty as to their exact meaning, however it is clear that all three fall into a similar semantic domain. The repetition of three near synonyms serves to heighten the man's delight in his lover, and the last one may be an exclamation of joy as the man anticipates union with his lover.¹³⁷ The first two descriptions are both preceded with the interrogative *מָה*, which serves to further heighten his rapturous delight in her.¹³⁸

133. Graham S. Ogden and Lynell Zogbo, *A Handbook on Song of Songs*, UBS Handbooks Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1998), 202.

134. Ogden and Zogbo, *Song of Songs*, 207.

135. Duane Garrett, "Song of Songs," in *Song of Songs, Lamentations*, Word Biblical Commentary 23B, ed. Bruce M. Metzger, David A. Hubbard and Glenn W. Barker (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2004), 237-238.

136. Tremper Longman III, *Song of Songs*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), 196, notes the first two as near synonyms.

137. Longman, *Song of Songs*, 197.

138. Ogden and Zogbo, *Song of Songs*, 202.

Line 2 may be the longer third line of an extended tricolon, if this verse is read as three lines, with the possible function of marking the beginning of this section or of merismus as the man declares the completeness of his lover's beauty.¹³⁹

Line 2 begins with אֶהְבָּה and it is unclear whether this refers to an abstract noun describing "love" or to the "lover" herself.¹⁴⁰ Either reading fits the context well. All three comparative translations have chosen some form of "lover."¹⁴¹

The man's praise in verse 6 sets up his analogically sensual, even erotic, comparison in the next two and half verses.

Verse 7 (Verse 8 in Hebrew)

Lines 1 and 2 exhibit parallelism thus:

| | | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------|------------|---------|
| זֹאת | קוֹמֶתְךָ | דִּמְתָּהּ | לְתֹמָר |
| | a | b | |
| וְשִׁדְיָךְ לְאַשְׁכְּלוֹת: | | | |
| | a' | b' | |

In these two lines, the man compares bodily features of his lover to a palm tree. In line 1, her קוֹמָה, literally "height," but in context probably more like "stature," "bearing"¹⁴² or "physique,"¹⁴³ is compared to a palm tree. That may not be the most obvious comparison a

139. Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry*, 178, 183-184.

140. Longman, *Song of Songs*, 190, states that it is an abstract noun that in this context is referring to the concrete person. Ogden and Zogbo, *Song of Songs*, 203, note that generally Song of Songs does not deal with abstract themes, therefore אֶהְבָּה most likely refers to the woman. Contra, Garrett, "Song of Songs," in Metzger, Hubbard and Barker, 243, understands it in an abstract sense as "love," claiming that the word is never concretised in Song of Songs, as does G. Lloyd Carr, *The Song of Solomon: An Introduction and Commentary*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1984), who also prefers an abstract meaning in keeping with the Hebrew text.

141. ESV has "loved one," and NIV and NLT "my love."

142. Carr, *Song of Solomon*, 161.

143. Garrett, "Song of Songs," in Metzger, Hubbard and Barker, 244.

typical English-speaking man would use for a beautiful woman, but it made sense in the author's context as a date palm was a magnificent tree associated with women,¹⁴⁴ especially when the second line is considered, in which the man compares his lover's breasts to the clusters of fruit on the date palm. A date palm is tall, straight and unbroken, until the clusters of dates are met in the upper portions of the tree. The prominence and perhaps general full and rounded shape of the date clusters resemble a woman's breasts,¹⁴⁵ thus highlighting how they are such an outstanding feature on her already wonderful body.¹⁴⁶

אֶשְׂבֹּל is also a relatively uncommon word and is usually used in the Hebrew Bible for grape clusters,¹⁴⁷ and indeed it is used in this way in verse 8. However in this verse it refers to clusters of fruit on a date palm, therefore they must refer to clusters of dates rather than grapes. Dates were a highly desired source of food in the Near East and the honey made from them was sweet.¹⁴⁸ Thus the man declares that his lover's breasts are not just outstanding and beautiful looking, but in some sense are also sweet, perhaps even to the taste, as we shall see in the next verse. The dates also represented the fertility of the palm tree.¹⁴⁹

Verse 7 is also interesting as it has a Janus structure with קִוְּמָתָךְ functioning as both the predicate of אַתָּה and the subject of the rest of the sentence.¹⁵⁰ This serves to put focus on that word, to describe how wonderful the stature or physique of the woman is.

144. Garrett, "Song of Songs," in Metzger, Hubbard and Barker, 244.

145. Duane Garrett, "Song of Songs," in *The Minor Prophets, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs*, Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary 5, ed. John H. Walton (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 2009), 529.

146. Tremper Longman, "Song of Songs," in *Job, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs*, Cornerstone Biblical Commentary, ed. Philip W. Comfort (Carol Stream: Tyndale House, 2006), 382.

147. Francis Brown, S. R. Driver and Charles A. Briggs, *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon: With an Appendix Containing the Biblical Aramaic* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1906), 79.

148. Nogah Hareuveni, *Nature in Our Biblical Heritage*, 3rd ed., trans. Helen Frenkley (Lod, Israel: Neot Kedumin, 2007), 75.

149. Longman, *Song of Songs*, 197.

150. Longman, *Song of Songs*, 190; Salisbury, *Biblical Hebrew Poetry*, 14.

Verse 8a (Verse 9a in Hebrew)

Verse 8 has four lines but the first two lines form one structural unit and the last two lines, along with the first line of verse 9, form a different structural unit, hence these units will be dealt with separately here.

The man now turns from praising the physical attributes of his lover, to expressing his desire for physical union with her.¹⁵¹ Verse 8 begins with אֶמְרָתִי, which although in the perfect form quite likely refers to a present or ongoing condition¹⁵² and expresses the man's firm intent to carry out the actions he describes in lines 1 and 2.¹⁵³

Lines 1 and 2 parallel each other, but together also parallel the two lines of verse 7. They parallel each other thus:

| | | |
|-----------|--------------|----------|
| אֶמְרָתִי | אֶעֱלֶה | בְּתֵמָר |
| | a | b |
| אֶחֱזֶה | בְּסִנְסֵנָה | |
| b' | a' | |

In both lines, we have an action verb and then the patient of that action. In line 1, the man will climb the date palm, an analogy for climbing or mounting the woman,¹⁵⁴ and then in line 2 he grasps the fruit, which is her breasts. אָחַז normally means "to seize" or "to grasp," but in the context it does not likely mean this literally, but rather is used poetically to communicate the eagerness of the man's intent to fondle the tree's fruit, that is, the women's breasts.¹⁵⁵ The word used for the tree's fruit, סִנְסֵנָה, is a hapax legomenon and thus its meaning is uncertain,

151. Roland E. Murphy, *The Song of Songs: A Commentary on the Book of Canticles or The Song of Songs*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis, Fortress, 1990), 182.

152. Carr, *Song of Solomon*, 162.

153. Garrett, "Song of Songs," in Metzger, Hubbard and Barker, 244.

154. Longman, *Song of Songs*, 197.

155. Garrett, "Song of Songs," in Metzger, Hubbard and Barker, 245.

but most likely stands synonymously in parallel with אֶשְׂבֹּל of line 2 of the previous verse and thus means cluster of fruit.¹⁵⁶

Together, lines 1 and 2 of this verse also parallel lines 1 and 2 of the previous verse. In verse 7, the man describes physical attributes of his lover and then in verse 8 he declares his intent of the actions he wishes to perform on these physical attributes, thus:

| | | | |
|----------------------------|-----------|---------|--------|
| זֹאת קִוְּמִתִּי | דְּמִתִּי | לְתֹמָר | 7(8) |
| a | b | | |
| וְשִׁדִּיךְ לְאֶשְׂבֹּלֹת: | | | |
| | a' | b' | |
| אִמְרָתִי אֶעֱלֶה בְּתֹמָר | | | |
| a | c | | 8a(9a) |
| אֶחֱזֶה בְּסִנְסִינִי | | | |
| | a' | c' | |

That is, the תֹּמָר (palm tree) of verse 8 is a repetition of the same word in verse 7, and the סִנְסִינִי of verse 8 is the synonymous equivalent of the אֶשְׂבֹּלֹת of verse 7. The use of the same word for palm tree also gives some rhyme between the ends of lines 1 of verses 7 and 8.

Verses 8b-9a (Verses 9b-10a in Hebrew)

Verses 8-9a form a threefold parallel structure in which the man expresses his desire for what are most likely tasting pleasures that the act of kissing the three mentioned features of his lover's body will bring him. Each body part is compared to something one either eats or drinks and so the man intends to kiss or taste these body parts of his lover. The three lines are

156. Odgen and Zogbo, *Song of Songs*, 205.

would also fit, as the man moves from the larger object of his lover's breast to her nipple, which he kisses or tastes. Song of Songs 4:5-6 suggests that aromatic perfumes were rubbed on the breast area meaning רִיחַ אֶפְרוֹדִיזִי could refer to the smell of her nipples.

Line 3 (the first line of verse 9) continues the man's desires for what he will find in his lover. The word translated "mouth" actually refers to the palate or inside of the mouth, and with the counterpart of good wine again refers to something he will taste. This means the man intends to taste the inside of his lover's mouth with his tongue, that is, to engage in deep, or French kissing.¹⁶⁵

Poetic Translation of Song of Songs 7:6-9a

- 6 How beautiful you are!
 How lovely you are!
 Loving you is sheer delight!
- 7 O your figure –
 is like a stately date palm tree,
 and your breasts like its rounded clusters of sweet fruit!
- 8 I intend to climb up this palm tree,
 and fondle its fruit!
 May your breasts be like rounded clusters of juicy grapes,
 and the aroma of your nipples like sweet smelling apples,
- 9 and the roof of your mouth taste like the best wine.

164. G. Sauer, "רִיחַ 'ap anger," in *Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament*, ed. Ernst Jenni and Clause Westermann, trans. Mark E. Biddle (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1997), 168, who notes that in Semitic languages the word or its equivalent was a term for the highest point or peak of an object, which as well as the nose, includes the nipple or breast. See also Garrett, "Song of Songs," in Metzger, Hubbard and Barker, 237.

165. Longman, *Song of Songs*, 198.

The main poetic devices used in this translation are the use of evocative language, analogy and parallelism that tightly follow the original.

Verse 6 (Verse 7 in Hebrew)

As the Hebrew uses three words of delight with similar meanings, so does the translation: “beautiful,” “lovely” and “sheer delight.” This heaping of superlatives gives them a similar effect as in the original of showing how much pleasure the man takes in his lover.

The repetition of *כֵּן* has been replicated with the repetition of “how” and with each line ending in an exclamation mark to add emphasis. In the English translation, line 1 in the Hebrew has been split into two lines so the repetition between them is more obvious.

In line 3, *תִּעֲנוּגִים* has been translated as “sheer delight” to convey the rapture the man feels in loving his lover.

Although as discussed, there are good reasons to translate *אֶהְבָּה* as either the concrete “lover” or the “abstract” love, I have chosen to use the abstract “love” as it seems to fit more with the poetic context, and it also follows the Septuagint. Rendering it as “loving you” makes it clear that this love is the love specifically directed towards his beloved.

Verse 7 (Verse 8 in Hebrew)

In the next verses, I have attempted to replicate the sensuous language of the original by choosing equally sensual words in English.

As discussed, *קוֹמָתָהּ* does not so much refer to the height of the woman, but to bearing or physique, and “figure” is probably the closest equivalent in English.

For my survey audience, the default fruit for a palm tree is most likely a coconut palm, and a hard coconut would be a poor comparison with a woman's breast. For this reason I have made it explicit that it is as a date palm that is been referred to by translating תְּמָר as "date palm tree."

Some of the botanical analogies may not be as immediate obvious to English-speaking readers as they were to the ancient Hebrews, so I have explicated with some adjectives to help the modern English reader understand how the ancient Hebrew viewed those objects. Thus in verse 7, "stately" has been added to "date palm tree" in order to convey the fine form of the tree, "rounded" has been added to "clusters" so that the reader has in view the same shape of the fruit clusters than would have been brought to mind for the ancient Hebrew reader, and "sweet" to fruit so that the modern reader understands the same attributes of the fruit that would have been brought to mind for the original reader.

I have attempted to replicate the effect of the emphatic Janus structure of קוֹמָתְךָ in line 1 by using the interjection "O," a dash (-) after the word "figure," and then a new line for the rest of the sentence. This should help to draw attention to "your figure" as it does in the original.

Verse 8a (Verse 9a in Hebrew)

I have expressed the firm intention of the man conveyed in Hebrew by אֶמְרָתִי, with the English "I intend."

The parallelism that was noted between lines 1 and 2 of the previous verse and lines 1 and 2 of this verse has been maintained.

No adjectives have been added to the nouns of lines 1 and 2 as they have already been sufficiently described in the previous verse. Additional information would detract from the main

purpose of these lines, which is the man's intention to mount the woman and fondle her breasts. A little alliteration is evident in line 2 with the "f" sound thus: "and fondle its fruit!"

Verses 8b-9a (Verses 9b-10a in Hebrew)

The single introductory exhortative יִהְיֶה֩ לָךְ֨ has been translated with, "May your," which as in the Hebrew covers the three desires of the man found in the three lines of this section. The threefold parallel structure has been maintained thus:

May your breasts be like rounded clusters of juicy grapes,

a

b'

and the aroma of your nipples like sweet smelling apples,

a'

b'

and the roof of your mouth taste like the best wine.

a''

b''

Even though the cluster has now changed from dates to grapes, and the normally used collective noun for grapes in English is "bunch of grapes," "cluster of grapes" has been used to preserve the correspondence with the "clusters of (date) fruit" in verse 7.

Similar to the previous verses, some adjectives have been added to some of the botanical terms to make the English speaker aware of implicatures understood by the original audience: "*rounded clusters*," "*juicy grapes*" and "*sweet-smelling apples*."

I have chosen "your nipples" to translate גִּיחִי֩ אֶפְרָ֨י . While it may be possible to sweeten the breath that comes from one's mouth, it is hard to see how it is possible to do so with the breath of one's nose, no matter what time period or culture someone comes from. On the other hand, it is quite possible to rub perfume or aromatic resins onto the breast area, which we probably see in Song of Songs 4:5-6.

As discussed, פה means the palate of the mouth, yet most English translation just use the general word “mouth” which only gives the inference of a general kiss, rather than the passionate deep kiss of the original. I have translated with “roof of the mouth,” to give the more accurate picture that the man’s tongue is in his lover’s mouth as he deeply passionately kisses her.

Some alliteration has been able to be achieved with the “pl” sound in line 4 of verse 8, thus: “and the aroma of your nipples like sweet smelling apples.”

Translation Approach

In terms of the main poetic devices of evocative language, analogy and parallelism that this passage employs, all have been carried over in translation. In this sense at least, the translation follows Holmes’s first approach. Yet going beyond these broad categories, significant adjustment has been made to the translation to adapt it to the English-speaker reader. The evocative language and analogy has in most cases been explicated so that the modern English reader can more readily understand and feel the emotions the original readers would have felt. In this sense, while the basics of the translation conform to the first of Holmes’s approaches, the details of how this is done show a domesticating approach. Thus we could say that this translation shows a mixture of Holmes’s first and second approaches, with the broad brush strokes following the first approach and the details following the second.¹⁶⁶

166. Holmes, “Forms of Verse Translation,” 95-96.

CHAPTER 5

OUTCOMES

Introduction

In this chapter, the data obtained from the survey will be presented, analysed and discussed, with some conclusions drawn as to the desirability of engaging in poetic translations of poetic passages of the Bible. Quantitative data from the survey can be found in Appendix B and qualitative data in Appendix C.

Demographics

A total of 170 people were sent the survey form, with 56 being sent the version with five passages (excluding the Song of Songs passage) and 114 being sent the version with all six passages. 97 returned at least partially completed survey forms, an overall return rate of 57%. 42 of those who received the five-passage version returned their surveys, a return rate of 75%, while only 55 of those who received the six-passage version returned theirs, a return rate of 48%. The reason for the large disparity between the return rates is unknown, however relatively large numbers of the six-passage version were sent out to those who were recommended by other participants and therefore had less of their own interest in completing the survey. The additional length and therefore work required for filling out the six-passage version may also have been a factor.

One of the survey returns was incomplete to the point of being unusable, and two of the respondents are actively engaged in the work of Bible translation and as such were felt to be too close to the topic and workings of this thesis to be able to provide data representing a typical reading population and were therefore excluded from the results. This left a total of 94 usable survey returns.

Of these 94 useable returns, 45 were submitted by males and 49 by females, a ratio of 48%:52%,¹ so roughly equal. In terms of age, 14 (15%) were 18-35 years old, 37 (39%) 35-55 years old and 43 (46%) over 55, meaning the younger age bracket was significantly under-represented. Except in the case of Song of Songs, there was no significant variation in receptivity based on gender and age. The reception of the poetic version of the Song of Songs passage showed a marked variation according to gender, which will be discussed later.

In terms of familiarity with the Bible, 56 (60%) reported that they were “very familiar” with the Bible, 28 (30%) as “somewhat familiar” and 10 (11%) as “unfamiliar.” Those unfamiliar with the Bible were under-represented, although by definition this demographic comprise those people least likely to be users of Bible translations. For some of the passages, there does appear to be a reverse correspondence between familiarity with the Bible and the reception of the poetic translation, and this may be due at least in part to familiarity effect, which will be discussed further below.

In terms of national demographics, 70 (74%) reported living in Australia, 11 (12%) in other English speaking countries and 13 (14%) in non-English speaking countries, while 58 (62%) reported being born in Australia, 25 (27%) as born in other English-speaking countries and 11 (12%) as born in in non-English speaking countries. In terms of language, 85 (90%) reported English as their mother-tongue or one of their mother-tongues, with the remaining nine (10%) reporting that English was not their mother-tongue, and 69 (73%) reported “Australian” as their dialect of English, with the remaining 25 (27%) reporting other dialects. As was expected, most respondents are from Australia and/or speak Australian English. Apart from the passage from Job, in which some specifically Australian terms were used in the poetic translation, there did not seem to be much variation based on national, language or dialectical identity.

1. Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number, meaning that due to rounding, at times summated percentages will not add up to 100%.

Integrity of Data

As well as marking their chosen translation for each question, around 80% of respondents also chose to give a written response to at least some of the questions in the survey. As well as aiding in understanding the quantitative data, which will be discussed later, these written responses help to validate the integrity of the questions asked and the integrity of the data obtained in the survey.

Survey Questions

Based on the written responses, with one exception, respondents did not confuse the questions or versions. The only exception to this is that for the Song of Songs passage, respondent 65 commented about the NIV, “This version leaves very little to the imagination and verges on erotica.” All other respondents who made that sort of comment made them about the poetic translation, not the NIV, and considering that in respondent 65’s version the poetic version was immediately followed by the NIV, he may have mixed them up. In all other cases in which respondents quote or allude to content, their identification of a particular translation matches the actual contents of the identified translation. Comments also matched the question being asked. Therefore, there is high confidence that respondents accurately identified both the questions and the translations when filling out the survey.

The written responses also indicate that in most cases, respondents clearly understood the questions being asked of them. These is even the case with some apparent contradictions.

For the Proverbs passage, respondent 64 marked the poetic translation as both her most liked and least liked translation. In her written comment for why she selected it as her most liked translation, she wrote, “It has a more challenging tone – it invites the reader to

evaluate,” and in her comment for why she selected it as her least liked translation she wrote, “for the above reason.” For both the impact and give to a friend questions, she also selected the poetic version and in both cases commented, “because of the challenge.” Therefore, it seems that she marked the poetic version in all three cases intentionally: on one hand she liked the challenge because it impacted her but by its very nature the challenge was also something that she did not like.

The question about impact was not always interpreted in a positive way by readers. That is, a translation may be either positively or negatively impactful. In 17 cases, eight of them with the Song of Songs passage alone, respondents marked the poetic translation as both their least liked as well as the most impactful. The cases where the impact is negative is particularly clear in some of the responses for the Song of Songs passage. For example, respondents 22, 40, 50, 62 and 81, who marked the poetic translation as both their least favourite and most impactful, gave the following comments for the impact question, “Because of its eroticism!” “Very graphic – fondling and nipples,” “Because of the porn factor,” “Too much detail,” “Unusual impact – it was so detailed, I got the giggles!”

Question 6 asked “Which version was the most beautiful or poetic?” In two cases respondents made a distinction between beauty and poetry: for the Lamentations passage, respondent 77 commented, “[The poetic translation] is more poetic, but not more beautiful,” and respondent 82 commented, “It was an attempt at poetry. I could see the picture painted, but I didn’t get a sense of it happening in real life. There was no beauty or life in the lines.” Apart from these two cases, the respondents’ comments indicated that they viewed poetry and beauty together.

Factors Influencing Survey Results

Order Effect

As predicted in the previous chapter, order effect could have been an issue with respondents' results. In terms of impact, four responses were explicitly given because that particular translation was the first listed: respondent 12 marked the NIV for the Psalms passage because "I read it first," respondent 73 marked the NLT for the Job passage because, "I haven't read this passage before, so at this first experience I was a bit shocked that the god is not letting the wicked live! A bit threatening!" respondent 12 marked the ESV for the Ecclesiastes passage because, "I read it first," as did respondent 42 for the poetic translation, "Because I read it first." It can probably be assumed that other respondents may have also marked the first passage they read but without stating this explicitly. However, because the project's design anticipated this and evenly mixed the order of the passages, the order effect should be roughly evenly apportioned for all four passages, and even then mostly seems to be confined to the impact question, and is therefore not a concern when analysing the results.

Familiarity Effect

An attempt was made to mitigate familiarity effect by choosing lesser known passages from each respective book. Despite this, it is clear that familiarity effect has influenced many respondents. This is clear both from the comments many respondents left as well as from a comparison between the quantitative data collected from those familiar with the Bible and those unfamiliar with it, as well as from those whose who recognised each passage and those who did not.

The following comments that respondents made indicate considerable influence from familiarity with either the specific passage or the style they are used to: "Because it is much

more familiar. Others seem like they are adding things to the text” (respondent 65 choosing the ESV for Psalms), “It feels familiar to me” (respondent 28 choosing the NIV for Psalms), “It reads better for me, perhaps I know it in this form?” (respondent 32 choosing the NIV for Psalms), “sounds like NIV. Don’t like that version” (respondent 24, although when choosing the NLT for his least liked translation of Psalms), “Sounded like King James version that I grew up reading” (respondent 85, although when choosing the NLT for the most impactful translation of Psalms), “I think it is the most familiar to me???” (respondent 80 choosing the NIV for Psalms), “Different to what I remember from Proverbs” (respondent 18 when choosing the poetic translation for the most impactful translation of Proverbs), “It’s similar to the version that I know, I think” (respondent 32 choosing the NLT for Proverbs), “It sounds the most familiar to the type of bible I read” (respondent 84 choosing the ESV for Job), “I’m not sure. Perhaps it sounds more familiar” (respondent 70 choosing the NIV for Job), “It doesn’t have ‘As’ as the first word and made me question what I have been reading for years (No I didn’t peek)...” (respondent 70 choosing the ESV for Ecclesiastes), “It sounds familiar to me and I understand it. The language doesn’t sound just like a paraphrase” (respondent 28 choosing the NIV for Lamentations), “Because I’m used to that version, perhaps?” (respondent 32 choosing the NIV for Song of Songs). Of these 13 comments, six were from the Psalms, two from Proverbs and Job, and one each from Ecclesiastes, Lamentations and Song of Songs. That almost half of comments were regarding the Psalms passage probably reflects the greater popularity of Psalms compared to other books, as noted in chapter 4. The respondents who made these comments in all cases correctly identified the poetic translation as being the one they were not familiar with. A number of other comments regarding perceived accuracy of the various translations further indicate evidence of familiarity bias.

In terms of quantitative results, familiarity bias may explain the strong variance in reception of the poetic translation for some of the passages between those who are very familiar and those who are unfamiliar with the Bible. A similar variance was also noted for some passages between those who recognised a particular passage and those who did not. When there are noteworthy variations, they will be discussed in more detail below as the results for each passage are considered.

Passages with Unfamiliar or Distracting Terms or Concepts

Some of the translations in some of the passages included concepts that some respondents reacted to in a way that substantially influenced their choices, and in some cases markedly influenced the overall results for that passage. These will be covered in more detail later in this chapter as each passage is considered in turn, but a brief summary is included below.

With the Proverbs passage, six respondents took exception to the what they felt was the non-inclusive ESV translation of אָדָם as “man” and this influenced them to evaluate the ESV translation negatively.

In the Job passage, the use of the Australian colloquialisms “fair go” and “battler” in the poetic translation provoked a strong negative reaction from 31 respondents, mostly Australian, who commented on it.

With the Ecclesiastes passage, the translation of שָׁמַל as “left” by the ESV and NIV was interpreted negatively as having the potential to be interpreted politically by ten respondents, influencing them to favour the NLT and/or poetic translation which both used “wrong” instead of “left.”

With the Song of Songs passage, 10 respondents commented that they felt the poetic translation was too explicit and/or erotic, causing them to choose it as their least liked translation.

Psalm 135:5-7

All 94 respondents answered most questions for Psalm 135:5-7. The most liked translation was the NLT with 32 respondents (34%) selecting it, followed closely by the NIV with 29 respondents (31%). The poetic translation came in third place with 17 (18%) preferring it, closely followed by the ESV with 16 (17%). The results for the question, “If you gave a copy of this passage to a friend, which version would you choose?” were very similar to the most liked metric, with the poetic translation only improving slightly to 20 respondents (22%) preferring it. We can see that generally, the NLT and NIV were clearly the most liked and recommended translations. In the opposite question, as to which translations were least liked, the poetic translation was the least liked by 35 respondents (38%), followed closely by the ESV with 32 respondents (34%). The NIV and NLT were equally least liked by the fewest respondents on 13 (14% each). It is very clear from the survey results that in terms of overall likeability, the poetic translation, pretty much equally with the ESV, was the least liked.

In terms of understandability, the NIV was clearly ahead with 43 responses (48%), with the poetic translation in third place with 17 responses (19%).

In terms of impact, the poetic translation came in second place with 28 responses (30%), which was very close to the NLT, which scored highest with 30 responses (32%). Many of the reasons given for the high impact of the poetic version were because of its poetic features, and included, “Most traditional, most poetic” (respondent 07), “more poetical” (respondent 08), “It is more dramatic” (respondent 17), “I like the way it flows and glorifies God” (respondent 24),

“The style was different, more poetic?” (respondent 32), “Grandeur and poetic language” (respondent 45), “It was the most descriptive and brought about the best picture” (respondent 52). This helps to explain why the poetic version was a very close second for most impactful translation, and some of the other comments of those who chose it as the most impactful help to explain why even though it rated highly for impact, that did not cause it to be liked more: “Because I had to read it twice to understand it and structure reinforces the meaning” (respondent 42, who chose the NIV as the most liked), “I didn’t necessarily like it the most, but I did like the poetic features of [the poetic translation]” (respondent 54, who marked the NIV as her most liked translation), “It sounded pretty, though if I were studying it, I would prefer option [NIV] because I find it more straight forward” (respondent 62, who chose the NIV as her most liked translation) and “The unusual flow of the thoughts necessitated greater concentration to follow the psalmist’s meaning” (respondent 69, who even though choosing the poetic version as the most impactful, also chose it as his least liked translation).

In answer to the question, “Which version was the most beautiful or poetic?” the poetic version was clearly ahead with 45 respondents (51%) selecting it, more than double the NLT which came second. Various poetic features were mentioned as appealing to readers, such as, “The language used (eg. summons)” (respondent 05), “Pretty words and phrases (mist instead of cloud, ‘flashes the lightening [*sic*’, etc)” (respondent 12), “The sentence structure reads more like poetry” (respondent 17), “Variant structure; imagistic vocabulary; evocative effect” (respondent 26), “the syntax wasn’t usual” (respondent 28), “some words (flashes, summons)” (respondent 34), “It flows well, like a poem” (respondent 36), “Repetitive ordered structure” (respondent 42), “It is mixed up in an ‘artsy’ way” (respondent 43), “The usage of words such as ‘mist’ and ‘depths’ show a more defined image in the reader’s mind” (respondent 62), “The last part: ‘From the ends of the earth, he raises the mist, To go with the rain, he flashes the

lightning, And from his storehouses, he summons the wind.’ – more interesting verb and noun combinations” (respondent 68), “The phrases ‘he raises the mist’ and ‘he flashes the lightning’ are very poetic” (respondent 75) and “the rhythm” (respondent 89). These comments show that most of the features that were intentionally included in the poetic translation, such as word order variation (“variant structure,” “the syntax wasn’t usual,” “mixed up in an ‘artsy’ way”), rhythm, the repetitive ordered structure in verse 7 and the use of more dramatic language, were recognised and appreciated by readers.

It is clear from these results that while the poetic translation of Psalms 135:5-7 was clearly recognised as the most beautiful and poetic of all the translations by over half of the respondents and was a close second as the most impactful, that this did not translate to likeability. In fact, it was the least liked translation. Why this is the case gets to the heart of this thesis, and an analysis of some of the comments respondents wrote may help to understand why.

There were 11 respondents who marked the poetic translation as both the most beautiful and poetic as well as their least liked translation. Most of them wrote comments on their survey form. When answering that the poetic translation was her least liked version, respondent 05 wrote, “I found it didn’t flow clearly,” and when selecting it as the most beautiful and poetic version she wrote, “The language used (eg. summons).” Respondent 11 for least liked version wrote, “It seems to say things in outdated ways,” but did not write a comment for the question on beauty and poetry. Respondent 12 for least liked version commented, “Unnatural, the word order seems - I don’t like dashes,” and for most beautiful and poetic wrote, “Pretty words and phrases (mist instead of cloud, ‘flashes the lightening [*sic*’, etc).” Respondent 17 for least liked wrote, “The language is more poetic and structure is more complex than the others,” and for most beautiful and poetic stated, “The sentence structure reads more like poetry.”

Respondent 28 for least liked commented, “It is harder to read out aloud,” and for most beautiful and poetic said, “the syntax wasn’t usual.” Respondent 43 wrote for least liked, “It is slightly confusing because it mixes up some of the sentences by having the verb second,” but when it came to the most beautiful and poetic version saw that same mixing up as an artistic feature: “It is mixed up in an ‘artsy’ way.” Respondents 77 and 81 in choosing the poetic translation as least liked commented, “Structure wasn’t easily readable,” and “Too wordy and descriptive,” without giving a reason for choosing it as the most beautiful and poetic.

These responses indicate that what made the poetic translation the least liked version was in fact its poetic features. Features such as unusual word order and descriptive language and even a poetic feel were recognised as beautiful and poetic but also as features which made the text difficult to read and less liked overall.

The most understandable translations from the survey were the NIV (48% of respondents) and the NLT (22% of respondents) and these were also the two most liked translations. A number of respondents’ comments indicate that they chose the NIV and NLT as their most liked versions because of their understandability. Those choosing the NIV wrote: “It is clear...” (respondent 08), “...Overall [NIV] seemed to use the clearest English” (14), “Least complex sentence structure; active voice” (26), “It is writen [*sic*] is simple language which is easy to understand” (36), “Seems more clear” (42), “It is clearer, seems to get the point across in a simpler way” (43), “It made sense faster than all the others” (54), “I found it the most readable...” (71) and “It read simply and clearly” (87). Those choosing the NLT wrote: “Easiest to follow and understand” (respondent 05), “it is the easiest readability to me” (16), “The structure and language are straightforward and clear” (17), “It conveys the message in the simplest terms” (22), “easiest to read” (33), “reads easily” (63), “Readable and like the word choices” (77) and “It appeals to my level of English” (89).

This indicates that for many readers, when it comes to the likeability of a translation, ease of understanding is a higher priority than beauty or poetry and that while poetic features may make the text more beautiful, they can also make it less understandable, which was viewed negatively by some respondents.

In Chapter 2, it was noted that while the poetic form may increase the mental processing effort required of the reader, this heightened need for mental engagement can actually serve to engage the reader as she is drawn into the interpretative process. Some of the readers' responses for the most impactful question support this argument. Respondent 42, when commenting as to why he chose the poetic version as the most impactful even though he chose the NIV as his most liked translation, wrote, "Because I had to read it twice to understand it and structure reinforces the meaning." Respondent 69 who chose the NLT as his most liked version and chose the poetic translation as both his least liked version as well as the most impactful version, for the impact question wrote, "The unusual flow of the thoughts necessitated greater concentration to follow the psalmist's meaning." This would indicate that although some readers recognise the increased impact and mental engagement from a poetic translation, this also does not necessarily translate into likeability.

Another factor which may have influenced respondents is the familiarity effect. There is a marked difference in responses of likeability between those familiar with the Bible and those who are not. While only 13% of respondents who are very familiar with the Bible marked the poetic translation as their most liked, this rose to 21% for those somewhat familiar and 40% amongst those unfamiliar with the Bible. Conversely, while the poetic version was easily the least liked by those very familiar with Bible on 45%, this drops to 29% for those somewhat familiar and down to only 20% for those unfamiliar with the Bible. We see a similar effect when looking at the results by passage recognition. For those who when asked if they recognised the

passage marked “yes,” only 9% found the poetic version the most likeable, but this rose to 18% for those who somewhat recognised the passage, and rose further to equal first place with the NLT, at 30%, for those who did not recognise the passage. Indeed, many of the comments made by respondents indicate the strong influence of the familiarity effect, such as: “Because it is much more familiar. Others seem like they are adding things to the text” (respondent 65, identifying as “very familiar” with the Bible, and who chose the ESV as his most liked version), “It feels familiar to me” (respondent 28, identifying as “somewhat familiar” with the Bible and who chose the NIV as her most liked version), “It reads better for me, perhaps I know it in this form?” (respondent 32, identifying as “very familiar” and who chose the NIV as his most like translation), “I think it is the most familiar to me???” (respondent 80, identifying as “somewhat familiar” and who chose the NIV as his most liked version).

Overall we can say that for the poetic translation of Psalm 135:5-7, it was overwhelmingly recognised as the most beautiful and poetic version and one of the most impactful, but this did not translate to likeability. In fact, roughly equal with the ESV, it was the least liked of all four translations. This can be explained by two causes: one is the familiarity effect, with the poetic translation becoming a lot more likeable the less familiar respondents were with the Bible and by implication with the well-known published versions of the ESV, NIV and NLT. The other cause is that it appears that the poetic nature of the poetic translation works against its likeability for many English speakers and which might indicate that perhaps most English readers do not actually like poetry that much, and this thought will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

It is also to be noted that according to Holmes's approaches to translating poetry,² the poetic translation of Psalm 135:5-7 adopted his first and second approaches, but even the features from his first approach are features that are not unfamiliar to English poetry. That is, the features used in the Psalm 135:5-7 poetic translation, such as dramatic imagery, rhythm and slightly unusual word order are features often found in English poetry. This is important as later we consider the reception of the poetic translations of the other passages which used different translational approaches to this one.

Proverbs 27:19

All 94 respondents answered at least some of the questions for the Proverbs passage. The most liked translation was the NLT with 30 respondents (32%), followed closely by the NIV with 28 respondents (30%) with the poetic translation a little further behind on 30 respondents (25%) and with the ESV trailing far behind in last place with 12 respondents (13%). Conversely, the ESV was marked as the least liked translation by 41 respondents (45%), followed by the poetic translation with 28 respondents (31%) and the NLT and NIV almost the same at 12 respondents (13%) and 10 respondents (11%) respectively. The answers for giving a copy to a friend were almost the same as those for the most liked translation. Clearly, the ESV was the least liked and the poetic translation was somewhere in the middle.

In terms of impact, the NIV, NLT and poetic translation were all even on 27 respondents (29%) each, with the ESV trailing on 13 respondents (14%).

In terms of understandability, the NLT received the highest score with 38 respondents (41%), followed by the poetic version in second place on 27 respondents (29%).

2. James S. Holmes, "Forms of Verse Translation and the Translation of Verse Form," in *The Nature of Translation: Essays in the Theory and Practice of Literary Translation*, ed. James S. Holmes, F. de Haan and A. Popovič (The Hague: Mouton de Gruyter, 1970), 95-96.

For beauty and poetry, the ESV was clearly the winner with 39 respondents (42%) favouring it, the poetic translation coming in a rather distant third on 20 respondents (22%), with the NLT being regarded as the least poetic with only 11 respondents (12%).

What is interesting from these results is to see that the poetic translation was average on both beauty and poetry as well as likeability. For some reason which is not clear, it was not regarded as the most poetic of the versions.

However, what is clear is that the ESV, which was clearly regarded as the most beautiful and poetic was also overwhelmingly regarded as the least liked. Conversely, the NLT, which was the most liked, was regarded overwhelmingly as the least poetic. Reading some of the respondents' comments helps us to see some of the same attitudes to poetry that were seen with the Psalms passage. In answering why they chose the ESV as their least liked version, respondents 28 and 42 respectively remarked, "The first line is poetic," and "Seems to be trying to be poetic and could be backwards." In explaining why they chose the ESV as the most beautiful or poetic, respondents 12 and 28 respectively wrote, "Sounds weird, so it must be poetic" and "the first line isn't the way you would normally speak."

Even though the version chosen as the most beautiful and poetic was different to the previous example from Psalms, we see a similar pattern emerging: that the more beautiful or poetic a version is perceived to be, the least liked it becomes. Some respondents even explicitly stated a negative reaction to poetry. This has strong implications for the desirability of translating the Bible poetically and will be discussed further later in this chapter.

Another factor influencing the low likeability for the ESV was its use of gender-specific language. Gender-specific language was intentionally avoided in the poetic translation, and was also avoided in the NIV and NLT, while the ESV used the gender-specific "man." Five

respondents (four women and one man) specifically remarked that their reason for choosing the ESV as their least-liked version was because of its use of the gender-specific “man.”

In terms of familiarity effect on the poetic translation, analysis of results based on familiarity with the Bible shows no clear pattern, however analysis by passage recognition does. The poetic translation had the lowest score for the “most liked” category by those who recognised the Proverbs passage (12%), was the second most liked by those who somewhat recognised the passage (26%), and was also the second most liked, but this time at 31% of respondents, for those who did not recognise the passage at all. A survey of respondents’ comments does not show any clear indication of familiarity effect on the evaluation of the poetic translation, but nevertheless the quantitative results do show that those who recognised this passage tended to choose one of the published translations that they were probably more familiar with.

In terms of translation approach, the poetic translation of Proverbs 27:19 was unique amongst the poetic translations done for this thesis in that it used Holmes’s third approach to translation of taking the semantic content of the original and essentially reconstructing a new poem.³ This means that Proverbs 27:19 was the most domesticating translation of all the poetic translations done for this thesis. This may explain why it was regarded as the most understandable compared to the poetic translations of the other passages (29%; compared to 19% for the Psalms passage, 20% for the Job passage, 6% for the Ecclesiastes passage, 4% for the Lamentations passage, and 27% for the Song of Songs passage). Similarly, it also had the highest score for likeability of all the poetic translations (25%; compared to 18% for the Psalms passage, 9% for the Job passage, 12% for the Ecclesiastes passage, 8% for the Lamentations passage and 18% for the Song of Songs passage). This further indicates that respondents prefer

3. Holmes, “Forms of Verse Translation,” 96.

domesticating translations that focus on understandability, and this will be discussed more later in this chapter.

Job 36:5-7

A total of 92 respondents answered at least some of the questions for the Job passage. In terms of likeability, a majority of 57% (52 respondents) preferred the NLT, 22 (24%) preferred the NIV, and the ESV and the poetic translation tied on a distant last at only 9 respondents (10%) each. In terms of the translation least liked, an overwhelming 63 (69%) of respondents marked the poetic translation as the least liked. In terms of giving a version to a friend, results were similar to most liked translation, except for the poetic translation which managed to increase its score to 13 respondents (15%).

In terms of impact, the NLT scored highest at 40 respondents (46%), with the poetic translation coming in third at 16 (18%). In terms of beauty and poetic effect, all translations were reasonably close, ranging from a high of 29 respondents (33%) for the ESV to a low of 17 respondents (20%) for the poetic translation. Initially it seems somewhat surprising that the so called “poetic translation” rates lowest for beauty and poetry and second lowest for impact.

The only metric on which the poetic translation scored reasonably was in understandability. Although the NLT, with 45 respondents (51%) was rated the most understandable, the poetic translation was rated as second, with 23 respondents (26%) choosing it. However, even though it was second for understandability, this result was still roughly half of the NLT.

The very poor performance of the Job poetic translation is striking, but reading the comments from respondents explains the reason why. Verse 6 (line 5) contains two Australian dialectical terms, “fair go” and “battler.” As explained in chapter 4, these words were chosen

because of their closeness to the original Hebrew meaning and because it was anticipated that most respondents would be Australian, or have had exposure to the Australian dialect, and so would have no problem with understanding them.

Most respondents were born in Australia (62%) or live in Australia (75%) or speak Australian English (74%), with many of the remaining respondents having some exposure to Australian English, so comprehensibility was not an issue. Six respondents, all of whom identified with speaking Australian English, left comments to that effect when answering the question on understandability. Respondent 09 commented, “colloquial language...,” respondent 19 remarked, “It’s colloquial so appeals to popular taste. However, other dialect groups might not agree,” respondent 50 wrote, “Because it is Aussie,” respondent 73 noted, “Seemed colloquial,” and respondent 90 wrote, “Appears to be Australian? ‘Fair go’ and ‘Battler’ reflects Australian values.” In contrast, only one respondent, respondent 84, who identified as speaking American English, noted in the section on least liked translation, “I do not know what it means ‘giving a fair to go to battler.’” It would seem that the use of these Australianisms contributed to the relatively high score for understandability.

However the increased understandability achieved by using these Australianisms was far outweighed by the negative reaction they caused. For the “least liked” metric, 27 respondents commented that they had chosen the poetic translation because of what they saw as its inappropriate use of Australian colloquial language in Scripture. The comments are: “Too colloquial” (respondent 04), “Too colloquial – something as important as the Bible needs more respect” (07), “picture it forms in my mind is weaker and ‘fair go to the battler’ sounds a bit corny like we expect to hear from Bill Shorten” (16), “Too colloquial. I’m not sure that non-Australians would fully appreciate the meaning” (19), “It is too casual in the wording (a bit Aussie)” (21), “Too folksy for this old man!” (26), “‘Fair to [sic] to the battler’ sounds very

Australian!" (29), "A 'fair go to the battler...' is more of a political slogan than scripture" (30), "'Fair go to the battler' doesn't gel with me" (35), "battler" (40), "Uses poorly defined / understood slang" (42), "Sounds Ocker and jerky" (47), "I didn't dislike it so much. It just seemed a bit Aussie" (50), "'giving a fair go to the battler' sounds a bit bogan to me" (60), "I didn't like the phrase 'fair go', it sounds awfully slang for the Bible..." (62), "It was too colloquial. Battler has many connotations that differ from one person to another, and it is not a term in general use anymore. It also does not make the contrasts as pointed" (65), "trying to be colloquial - just weird" (67), "Phraseology is awkward; and word choices seem narrow culturally, particularly with reference to the 'battler'" (69), "Sounds clunky and culturally bound. Aussie. Casual..." (70), "The phrase 'but giving a fair go to the battler.' feels a too casual for a translation of scripture. I value readability, but still think it is important that an element of formality is important" (71), "For something as lofty as this (divine you might say!), the register seemed off to me. Words like 'battler' make me think of the good ol' Aussie battler and his fair go, and that, for me, conflicted with the high tone for how the speaker otherwise refers to his god" (73), "'Giving a fair go to the battler' is a bit too much slang for my liking" (75), "Uses language that is culturally out of place" (77), "Unusual choice of language e.g. line 5 – too casual for me" (81), "'giving a fair go to the battler' is too colloquial – not a sentence befitting of the bible" (86), "too colloquial – cultural idiom 'battler'" (88), and "written for one culture" (89). All except one of these respondents either speak Australian English or live or have lived in Australia.

The strong negative reaction to terms that helped understandability but were felt to be of an inappropriate register for the Bible was surprising and the depth of feeling was expressed not just by those who identified as very familiar with the Bible, but also by those somewhat familiar and unfamiliar.

It is evident by the use of several Australian colloquialisms in their own comments that respondents themselves are happy to use these terms in normal speech, but feel they are not appropriate for the Bible. Many comments also indicate that just because the term is “Aussie” it is inappropriate for the Bible, as though God should not speak in Australian English. Of course this has massive implications for the acceptability of Bible translation into Australian English, and possibly into dialects of other languages, however that is not the purpose of this thesis, so will not be discussed further here.

In regard to this thesis, the main thing that can be said about this reaction to the Australianisms in the poetic translation for Job 36:5-7 is that they became the primary arbiter for the value of the translation for many respondents, to the extent that it has obscured the assessment of other features of the translation such as its poetic effects. Unfortunately, this means that the responses for Job 36:5-7 are not very helpful for the purposes of this thesis and cannot really be used to form any conclusions.

Ecclesiastes 10:1-3

For the Ecclesiastes passage, 90 respondents answered at least some of the questions. In terms of likeability, the poetic translation scored very poorly. The most liked translation was the NLT, chosen by 40 respondents (44%), with the poetic translation coming last with only 11 respondents (12%) choosing it. In terms of the least liked translation, 50 respondents (57%) selected the poetic translation. For the question about which version to give to a friend, the results were very similar to the most liked version, with the poetic version again coming last with only 10 respondents (11%) choosing it.

In terms of both understanding and impact, the poetic translation also scored very poorly, coming last in both cases. Only 12 respondents (14%) chose it as the most impactful and only five (6%) chose it as the most understandable.

The low scores for likeability, understanding and impact for the poetic translation would probably have been even lower if some correspondents had not excluded the ESV and the NIV for what they saw as political language. The ESV and NIV translated שָׁמַל literally as “left,” and paired with the word “right,” ten respondents made negative comments that this could be interpreted politically. In contrast, the NLT and the poetic translation used the word “wrong” instead, which in the case of the poetic translation was intentionally done to avoid the unintended political connotations of a “right/left” translation, as discussed in chapter 4. Despite this positively viewed word choice, the poetic translation still scored negatively on these metrics.

However, in terms of beauty and poetry, the poetic translation did very well. 45 respondents (52%) regarded it as the most poetic, more than all the other versions combined. This was also the highest beauty and poetry score of any of the translations of any of the six passages (the poetic translation of the Psalms came close with 51%, followed by the Lamentations passage on 44%, the Song of Songs passage on 24%, the Proverbs passage on 22% and the Job passage on 20%).

What explains such a strong contrast between likeability on one hand and beauty and poetry on the other? Again, reading the respondents’ comments reinforces what we found for the Psalms passage: while respondents can recognise the poetic features and beauty of the poetic translation, this does not translate into likeability and often works against it.

For those respondents who marked the poetic translation as the least liked and left a comment, references to its poetic features are quite common: “Awkward phrase structure”

(respondent 02), “No verb in the second sentence, the style of the last sentence doesn’t flow easily” (03), “Feels clumsy” (04), “though poetical, too difficult (08)”, “It was difficult to read and understand” (11), “just sounds clunky” (18), “Awkward syntax” (22), “More poetic” (28), “‘perfumer’s perfume putrefies’ feels awkward!” (31), “Awkward & clumsy” (32), “old [sic] word order” (33), “Too complex in structure, second line had to read twice to understand” (35), “Language feels convoluted and cumbersome” (60), “The alliteration at the beginning and the sentence structure makes it clunky and hard to follow” (62), “It reads clumsily” (64), “This version was quite clumsy, especially the first line...” (65), “Back to front sentence construction does not appeal to me from a readability point of view” (69), “While I can read this, it requires more attention. I think this relates to sentence structure/word ordering...” (71) and “Weird language in this one” (81). Many of the features that respondents complained about were poetic features intentionally included in the translation, such as unusual word order, verb ellipsis and alliteration.

On the other hand, for those who marked the poetic translation as the most beautiful and poetic, many of the comments highly praised its poetic features, such as, “How can’t you find the alliteration of ‘perfumer’s perfume putrefies’ beautiful, even if what it is describing isn’t. That’s poetry!” (respondent 12), “...- imagery mostly” (17), “It has beautiful cadence in expressing the similes and contrasts” (19), “More imaginative structure and phraseology” (26), “It appears this version is very intentionally poetic in its translation” (30), “Balance and structure” (42), “alliteration” (63), “Although the meaning was a bit impenetrable at first read, that didn’t deduct from a more balanced metre than the others, and the first line alliteration was quite fun” (73) and “Loved the alliteration in the first line” (82). Out of these nine responses, only three selected the poetic translation as their most liked (respondents 19, 30 and

82), showing that readers can at one time appreciate the poetic features of the poetic translation and still not select it as their most liked translation.

This contrast is even more marked when we note that 23 respondents actually marked the poetic translation as both their least liked translation as well as the most beautiful or poetic translation. Three of them actually made favourable comments regarding the poetry in the poetic translation: “It seems to have a purposely controlled rhythm” (respondent 11), “Seems to have its own rhythm as I read it” (60) and “The alliteration at the beginning, and the repetitive use of the word “heart” (62). Despite praising these poetic features, it still did not stop them marking the poetic translation as their least favourite.

Three more respondents who marked the poetic translation as both least liked and most beautiful or poetic made interesting comments: “The first line is not normal speech” (28), “Because of the rather odd (poetic???) phraseology” (69) and “The word selection in version [poetic translation] is probably the most poetic, but this makes the passage harder to read” (71). Again, this reinforces previous findings, that the poetic features can be viewed negatively by readers.

Breaking down the results by familiarity with the Bible or passage recognition does not yield a sustained trend. Most liked is almost the same regardless of familiarity, although with least liked there is a steep gradient, going from 73% of those very familiar with the Bible selecting the poetic version as least liked, to 43% for those who are somewhat familiar to 11% for those unfamiliar with the Bible. In terms of passage recognition, there is no consistent trend for either the most liked or least liked translation. Therefore, the only metric in this field that shows a consistent trend is the rating for least liked by Bible familiarity, but considering only 9 respondents were unfamiliar with the Bible, it is unwise to draw too many conclusions from a low sample population when this is the only metric in this field showing a discernible trend.

What is also surprising is that even though the beauty and poetry score was very high for the poetic translation, as well as not translating into likeability, it also did not translate into impact. As noted earlier, the poetic translation came last in terms of impact, at 14%. With the poetic translation of Psalm 135:5-7, we noted that even though it was not the most liked translation, it was still rated as the second most impactful translation. Why is this pattern not repeated with Ecclesiastes 10:1-3? The comments that respondents provided do not seem to shed light on this matter, so it is hard to draw a firm opinion on this matter, however it may relate to the approach taken with translating this passage.

In chapter 4, it was noted that Holmes's first approach to translation was used with the translation of Ecclesiastes 10:-3, meaning that the poetic forms of the original were largely carried through into translation.⁴ In chapter 4, I stated that I felt that this would not give the translation a strong foreignising feel, but that it would be interesting to see how the translation fared in the survey. It seems that the survey results have indeed been interesting, and that my judgement about the lack of a foreignising feel was misplaced. Respondents' comments strongly affirm that to them, the translation felt strongly foreignised. This may explain that although the poetic translation was rated highly as beautiful and poetic, this did not translate into impact. This is because most of the poetic features used in the poetic translation are not widely used in English poetry and thus do not achieve the desired emotive effect. It is interesting to note that the only poetic feature that was commented on in only a positive way and never negatively by respondents was that of rhythm, which is a strong feature of English poetry.

4. Holmes, "Forms of Verse Translation," 95.

Lamentations 3:52-54

A total of 91 respondents answered at least some of the questions for the Lamentations passage. In terms of likeability, the most liked version was the ESV with 31 respondents (34%), followed closely by the NIV with 28 respondents (31%) and the NLT with 25 respondents (27%). The poetic version came in a distant last with only 7 respondents (8%) choosing it, the worse result for the poetic translation across all passages. In terms of least liked, an overwhelming majority of 63 respondents (70%) chose the poetic version, with the three remaining versions of ESV, NLT and NIV roughly sharing the remaining respondents on 11%, 10% and 9% respectively. The scores for giving to a friend were very similar to the most liked scores, with the poetic translation dropping slightly further to only 5 respondents (6%), again the worst score in that category for the poetic translation across all the passages.

In terms of understandability, the poetic translation scored even worse, being selected by only 4 respondents (4%), with the NLT scoring the best for understandability with 34 respondents (38%).

In terms of impact, the poetic translation scored slightly better, but still worse than any of the other translations, with 12 respondents (13%) selecting it as most impactful. The NLT had the highest score, at 26 respondents (29%) for impact.

The only field in which the poetic translation stood out was in the metric of beauty and poetry. More respondents regarded it as the most beautiful and poetic than any of the other versions. 40 respondents (44%) rated it as the most beautiful and poetic, followed by the ESV on 32 respondents (36%), then the NIV with 15 respondents (17%), with only three respondents (3%) selecting the NLT.

There does not seem to be a clear trend of any differentiation in any of the metrics when broken down by demographics, with the exception of mother-tongue English speakers

verses non-mother tongue speakers. No non-mother tongue English speakers selected the poetic translation as their most liked and only 22% selected it as the most poetic, compared to 47% for mother tongue speakers. This may be because poetry is language specific, however it would be unwise to read too much into this statistic as the sample size of non-mother tongue speakers was quite small at only 9 respondents.

Again we see the pattern of beauty and poetry not translating into likeability, and like the Ecclesiastes passage, also mostly not translating into impact. The Lamentations passage of the poetic translation had the worst scores in all metrics except beauty and poetry across the six passages. It is clearly the least successful of all the six poetic translations, and a look at respondents' comments as well as the translation approach taken gives the reason why.

The poetic translation of Lamentations 3:52-54 was the most foreignising of all the passages translated, falling very clearly into Holmes's first approach to poetic translation of strongly carrying over the poetic features of the original into the translation.⁵ The two major features of the Lamentations translation were preservation of the acrostic structure and the *qinah* metre from the Hebrew, both of which are very foreign to English speakers. In order to achieve an acrostic structure, some very unusual English grammar was employed, such as the use of participles to begin sentences. Much of the intra-verse alliteration was also preserved. An analysis of respondents' comments indicates that while many people recognised these poetic features, they often saw them as confusing and distracting.

In terms of positive comments, for the question on beauty and poetry, we find the following comments regarding the poetic features listed in the previous paragraph: "I liked the alliteration (from the original?)..." (respondent 08), "It uses controlled vocabulary and form" (11), "Alliteration (all the S words) onomatopoeia (sloshing)" (17), "starting the sentences with

5. Holmes, "Forms of Verse Translation," 95.

present participles isn't typical" (28), "Alliteration at the beginning of each line. The phrase 'rock-carved reservoir' also sounds very pretty" (62), "rhythm" (63), "its clipped thought, alliteration and starting with active words such as sloshing, Stalking and silencing" (64) and "Beginning each line with the same sound has a great effect; the language seems more poetic than literal" (75). A couple of other positive comments are found for the question on most liked translation: "I enjoyed the acrostic alphabet translation" (18), and "Best written- all begin with asome [*sic*] sibilant gerund, other alliterations in there, silence in a 'rock-carved reservoir' sounds a lot more foreboding than a simple pit death." (73).

In terms of negative comments for the question on least liked version, it is clear that these same poetic effects were not viewed positively by many respondents: "The staccato character of the poetry, not as smooth" (respondent 03), "It's grammatically incorrect. It has misplaced modifiers which create ambiguity..." (19), "Awkward syntax" (22), "Too gimmicky by far; lacks precision of meaning in an apparent quest for populist favour" (26), "Some words and lines are not clear and need some assumptions to be made about what they mean" (30), "The S's starting each phrase don't really make it easier" (35), "It does not include [*sic*] / have a subject. ie, it does not say who does [*sic*] the stalking etc" (36), "'rock-carved reservoir?' 'try hard' 'Sloshing'? passive informal" (42), "I thought it seemed like it was just choosing certain words for the sake of alliteration, rather than accurately portraying meaning being the primary goal" (57), "Use of metaphor and language that grated on me rather than helping me empathise with the author" (60), "It is just very clumsy and doesn't seem to flow" (65), "trying to be poetic - just weird" (67), "Inelegant and jerky literary style" (69), "Contrived. The meaning gets lost in the poetry" (70) and "The attempt at alliteration was offputting" (77). From these responses, it seems clear that many respondents reacted negatively to the unusual word order, grammatical constructions and word choices which were necessary to conform to an acrostic structure and

the *qinah* metre, even though awkward and unusual forms were also often a feature of acrostic poetry in the Hebrew original.⁶ For some readers, even the alliteration was viewed negatively.

The comments from those who chose the poetic translation as the most beautiful or poetic as well as their least liked version are also informative. Although for the question on most beautiful and poetic respondent 08 wrote, “I liked the alliteration (from the original?)...,” when selecting the poetic translation as his least liked he wrote, “beautiful poetry, but not very helpful for clear understanding.” Respondent 11 wrote, “It uses controlled vocabulary and form,” for his answer to most beautiful and poetic, but, “I don’t think it uses proper sentences!” for his answer to least liked version. Respondent 62, who praised the poetic translation for the beauty/poetry question with, “Alliteration at the beginning of each line. The phrase ‘rock-carved reservoir’ also sounds very pretty,” also wrote, “It sounds pretty just for reading, but it would be frustrating if I were to study it,” for her response for the least liked question.

In most other passages, there is a strong correlation between understandability and likeability, leading to the conclusion that readers seem to prioritise understanding over other factors when choosing the version they like the most. However, in the case of the Lamentations passage, this correlation is much weaker. The most liked version was the ESV, and yet it came third on the understandability metric. It did, however, score highest in impact and second highest for beauty and poetry. This would indicate that although understandability is an important factor for likeability, impact and poetics also play a role. However, in the case of the poetic translation, even though it was recognised as the most beautiful and poetic by the most respondents, the poetry was too foreign to be liked, and the more familiar poetic form of the ESV was preferred.

6. Timothy Lloyd Wilt, “Alphabet Acrostics: Perhaps the Form Can Be Represented,” *The Bible Translator* 44, no. 2 (April 1993): 208.

One other factor that should be taken into account is that testing an acrostic version of Lamentations 3:52-54 without the rest of the chapter deprived it of its context. Had the whole of Lamentations 3 been translated acrostically, the acrostic nature of the poem may have been clearer to readers and might have been more appreciated.

Song of Songs 7:6-9a

As mentioned above, a smaller number of respondents were given the Song of Songs passage. 51 respondents answered at least some of the questions for this passage. The ESV, NIV and NLT all tied for first place on the most liked metric with 14 respondents (27% each). The poetic translation came in last with only 9 respondents (18%) choosing it. It was in the least liked metric that the results for the poetic translation really stood out. 32 respondents (63%) selected it as the least liked version, followed by 15 (29%) for the ESV. For the metric of giving a copy to a friend, the results were similar to the most liked metric. Clearly the poetic version was the most disliked.

In terms of understandability, the NLT scored the highest with 20 respondents (42%), followed by the poetic version with 13 (27%).

In terms of beauty and poetry, the ESV came first with 18 respondents (36%), followed by the poetic version with 12 (24%), although the NIV and NLT were not far behind with 10 respondents (20%) each.

It was only in the area of impact that the poetic version excelled. 22 respondents (44%) chose it as the most impactful, double the second-place getter of the NLT with 11 respondents (22%).

Thus we see that the results for the Song of Songs passage are quite different to the others. The version was decidedly the most disliked, however it came second for both

understandability and beauty/poetry and scored strongly on impact. Reading the respondents' comments explains why this is the case.

There were many comments from respondents indicating that they felt the poetic version was too explicit, with too many sexual details. For the least liked question, we find the following comments: "Over sensationalised" (respondent 02), "A bit too explicit a holy book" (04), "a bit explicit perhaps?" (07), "It seems unnecessarily erotic" (22), "So folksy that it becomes profane" (26), "Crikey - Little too graphic" (40), "Too explicit" (45), "Sounds like it went through a porno translator" (50), "Way too much detail, but not in a delicate way" (62) and "Too descriptive for me!" (81).

For the question on impact, the following respondents marked the poetic version as the most impactful, while also marking it as their least favourite, suggesting that although they viewed it as the most impactful, it was a negative impact: "Somewhat titillating" (respondent 04), "Because of its eroticism!" (22), "Because of the porn factor" (50), "Too much detail" (62) and "Unusual impact – it was so detailed, I got the giggles!" (81).

For understandability, its explicitness contributed to the poetic version's high score in that metric, as can be seen from the following answers to that question: "While distasteful, its explicit profanity is unmistakeably clear" (respondent 26), "Do I really need to say why?!!" (32), "Less poetry and imagery, and just says it like it is!" (54) and "More explicit" (90).

Some word choices came in for particular criticism: two did not like "fondle" and four did not like "roof of your mouth."

Therefore, it seems clear that the overriding feature that influenced respondents' choices was what they perceived as the over-eroticised nature of the poetic translation. The main poetic feature employed in the poetic translation was the explication of evocative language and analogy so that modern readers would understand better the feelings an ancient

Israelite reader would have felt when hearing the terms employed in this passage. However for some reason, most modern English speakers feel that this is not appropriate for Scripture, and this reaction was evident among respondents across all levels of Bible familiarity.

There was a marked difference in receptivity of the poetic translation of the Song of Songs passage according to gender. For men, the Song of Songs passage came a very close third place as most liked translation (26%) compared to only one female respondent (5%) who selected the poetic translation as her most liked version. Conversely, while 52% of men chose it as their least liked version, 80% of women chose it as least liked.

Perhaps this large gender difference can be attributed to the fact that this passage was given to respondents out of context. In its context, this passage is part of a beautiful and mutual exchange between the man and the woman as they sing or say praises to each other. However, Song of Songs 7:6-9a is only the man's speech. In isolation, female readers might read it as the man using the woman as a sex object, without realising that the sexual attraction is a two way thing and is mutual and willing. If a passage from Song of Songs were to be tested again, it would be important to make sure that parts of both the woman's and the man's utterances are included.

Overall, the results for this passage do not help the purpose of this thesis much. The use of poetic devices in the poetic translation certainly helped with understanding and impact, but at the same time made the passage too understandable for most readers so that they felt it was no longer appropriate language for Scripture. Therefore, the sensual details and perceived eroticism became the primary determiners of likeability rather than any poetic effect.

Synthesis

There was a wide range in approaches to translation and the use of poetic devices across the six passages chosen for this exercise, and this was reflected in the quite different results achieved for each passage. This is helpful, because it not only helps us to answer the question about the receptivity of poetry in general, but also helps us to know which poetic features are received well, and which of Holmes's approaches to translation will achieve the best results.⁷

Unfortunately, although they give useful information in other areas, the results of the Job and Song of Songs passages are not useful for the purposes of this thesis due to other factors which strongly affected their scoring. In the case of Job 36:5-7, the use of Australian dialectal language strongly influenced the results, and while this has implications for Australian dialectal Bible translation (and perhaps dialectal translation in other languages), it does not directly bear on the question of poetics in translation. Similarly, in the case of Song of Songs 7:6-9a, what was perceived as the over detailed nature and eroticism of the poetic translation strongly influenced its results. While this has implications on the acceptability of sexual language in Scripture for English speakers, it also does not directly bear on the question of poetics in translation.

Of the four remaining passages, the most foreignising, which solely used Holmes's first approach, was Lamentations 3:52-54. This was followed by Ecclesiastes 10:1-3 which also largely used Holmes's first approach but this time with forms more familiar to English speakers. Then came Psalms 135:5-7, which was a mixture of the first and second approach but even then the particular first approach features used were ones that were somewhat familiar to English speakers. The most domesticating translation, utilising Holmes's third approach, was Proverbs

7. Holmes, "Forms of Verse Translation," 95-96.

27:19. All of them, except Proverbs 27:19, were judged by readers to be the most beautiful or poetic of the four translations, however their likeability varied dramatically. Table 1 shows the correlation between translational approach and likeability.

Table 1: Relationship of Translational Approach to Likeability

| | Lam 3:52-54 | Eccl 10:1-3 | Ps 135:5-7 | Prov 27:19 |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|----------------|------------------------|
| Holmes's approach to translation | 1 (strongly) | 1 | 1-2 (mostly 2) | 3 |
| Domestic / foreign | strongly foreignising | foreignising | domesticating | strongly domesticating |
| Most liked - overall | 8% | 12% | 18% | 25% |
| Most liked – no passage recognition | 2% | 14% | 30% | 31% |
| Least liked - overall | 70% | 57% | 38% | 31% |
| Least liked – no passage recognition | 69% | 48% | 30% | 19% |

From this table, it can clearly be seen that there is a direct correlation between translation approach and likeability. The more foreignising the poetic translation, the less it is liked and the more domesticating, the more it is liked. If we attempt to adjust for familiarity bias by only looking at those results where people indicated that they did not recognise the passage, we notice that the difference becomes even stronger. In the case of Psalm 135:5-7, the poetic translation becomes the equal most liked, along with the NLT, at 30% of responses, however it still remains the equal least liked, along with the ESV, at 30%. In the case of Proverbs, it becomes the second most liked (after the ESV), at 31%, and with a least liked rating of only 19%.

Should we Translate Poetically?

The Problem with Poetry

Although the results of the survey show that the more domesticating the translation approach, the more likeable the translation becomes, even the most likeable poetic translation, Proverbs 27:19, is still not the most liked of all the translations. This is still the case, even when familiarity bias is taken into account.

We noted that throughout the survey results, respondents frequently commented that it was in fact the poetic nature of the poetic translations that caused them to dislike them.

It could be argued that the translations in this thesis were all done by one poet-translator (the present author), and that translations done by different poet-translators might achieve different results. It would certainly be desirable to do more testing with a range of different poet-translators. However, we do have some evidence that other poetic translations are similarly perceived.

It was noted earlier in this chapter that the poetic translation was not perceived as the most beautiful or poetic version of Proverbs 27:19, but that the ESV was. We also noted that even though the ESV was clearly regarded by 42% of respondents as the most poetic, it was also regarded as the most liked by the fewest number of respondents (13%) and the least liked by the most (45%). We also noted that some respondents specifically stated that it was the poetic nature of the ESV translation that caused them to dislike it.

In Ernst Wendland's survey of six English translations of Psalm 134, of which three were well known published translations and the other three were in some sense poetic, we notice a similar pattern. The most poetic version, a highly stylised translation following the poetic Ribliw form by Brenda Boerger, was marked by five out of six groups as the least favourite, with the sixth group marking another poetic translation, done by the Church of Scotland, as its least

favourite. Neither of these translations was any group's favourite version. Wendland's own translation did score well, however he purposefully set out to make a stylistically domesticating version.⁸

Who Are We Translating for?

It would seem then that against the expectations of this thesis, that at least in English, poetic translations are generally not that well received. Does that mean we should not translate poetically? To answer that question, we need to ask, "Who are we translating for?"

In the results of the survey, we noted that there was a very high correlation between understandability and likeability. Although not the only factor, it does appear that for most respondents, understandability was the most important factor influencing likeability. If we are translating the Bible with the primary purpose of it being liked, then we should prioritise understandability above all else, even if this means forgoing poetic translation. But we should not just assume that we translate primarily for the readers to like what they read.

Robert Alter, in the introduction to his recently published Hebrew Bible, is scathing of English translations of the Bible, from the King James through to modern versions.⁹ He is highly critical of the underlying philosophy behind modern English translations of making them accessible to the reader.¹⁰ He decries what he regards as the general decline of the English language which has led to far too few people being competent in expressing its richness.¹¹ He advocates using such poetic devices as inverted word order and archaisms when translating

8. Ernst R. Wendland, *Studies in the Psalms: Literary-Structural Analysis with Application to Translation* (Dallas: SIL, 2017), 416, 422-426.

9. Robert Alter, *The Hebrew Bible: A Translation with Commentary* (New York: Norton, 2019), 1:xiii.

10. Alter, *Hebrew Bible*, 1:xv.

11. Alter, *Hebrew Bible*, 1:xiv.

poetry.¹² In the survey for this thesis, we have seen that such poetic devices are not well received by most readers, but this would not bother Alter as his primary purpose is not for his translation to be accessible, but for it to be literal and beautiful.

Alter argues that the Hebrew Bible was written with a different vocabulary set and rules of grammar than the vernacular Hebrew of the time, although he does admit at times he has no proof for some of his claims.¹³ Based on this, he reasons that there is no good reason to translate Biblical Hebrew into contemporary English.¹⁴

Counter to this, Lamin Sanneh states that, “Translation is not so the initiated can traffic in the arcane and baffling, nor is it an occasion of linguistic perfection and literary virtuosity. Rather, translation is empowerment for the humble in heart to seek fellowship with their God.”¹⁵ For the Christian, accessible translation goes to the heart of the Gospel and the incarnation in which God humbled himself to be accessible to humanity.¹⁶

Conclusion

In chapter 2, the question was asked if the domesticating approach used for translating prose is appropriate for poetry because much of the beauty and impact of poetry is lost in a domesticating translation. The survey results would seem to suggest that even in the translation of poetry, that a domesticating approach is necessary if we believe that the primary purpose of translating Scripture is for it to be accessible for the average person and not just for the academic or literary expert.

12. Alter, *Hebrew Bible*, 3:18.

13. Alter, *Hebrew Bible*, 1:xxiv-xxv.

14. Alter, *Hebrew Bible*, 1:xxvii.

15. Lamin Sanneh, *Translating the Message: The Missionary Impact on Culture*, 2nd ed., American Society of Missiology Series 42 (Maryknoll: Orbis, 2009), 120.

16. Sanneh, *Translating the Message*, 120.

Does that mean that at least in the English language, that we should not translate poetically? Not necessarily. Even though the results of the survey were not as positive as I would have liked, when the familiarity effect was accounted for, the second and third translation approaches used in Psalm 135:5-7 and Proverbs 27:19, which are more domesticating, achieved similar likeability scores as the most liked translations, with the added benefit of also, in the case of Psalm 135:5-7, being regarded as the most impactful and the most beautiful and poetic translation, and in the case of Proverbs 27:19, as having a good balance of impact, understandability and beauty and poetry.

It should be noted that the poetic translations were completely untested prior to being surveyed by the respondents, who were asked to compare them with three very popular translations that have gone through much testing and multiple revisions. With testing and revision, the quality and acceptability of the poetic translations would probably improve. This might also apply to the poetic translations of Job 36:5-7 and Song and Songs 7:6-9a. It would be interesting to re-test those passages if the Australianisms in the Job translation were changed, and if the sensual nature of the Song of Songs translation was toned down, and/or it was presented along with a portion of the woman's speech so that it could be read in its correct context.

Poetic translations that are closer to Holmes's first translational approach and which are quite foreignising, such as the ones for Ecclesiastes 10:1-3 and for Lamentations 3:52-54, should be avoided because although they are regarded as beautiful and poetic by readers, the penalty of lack of understanding and likeability is too great.

Poetic translations which follow the second and third approaches may work, if they can achieve acceptable understanding and likeability in their attempt to bring across some of the beauty and poetry of the original. However, translators should be careful to use poetic features

most familiar and acceptable to English speakers, and should test their results in a manner similar to that done in this thesis, and be willing to revise their translation or even translational approach in order to achieve better results.

It should also be borne in mind that these results only apply to the English language, and most modern English speakers have probably lost much of their respect and love for poetry.¹⁷ Other languages may well have a different appreciation for the poetic form. The results of this survey only apply for translations into English. However, the methodology and structure of the survey used in this thesis could be used for other languages, and it is highly recommended that any translation team considering doing a poetic translation test some samples of poetic translations against prose translations to see how well they are received, before embarking on the more difficult exercise of poetic translation.

Regardless of the language, if a Bible translation team is considering doing poetic translations of the poetic portions of the Hebrew Bible, they should proceed with caution, testing as they go, especially early in the process, to see how well the receptor language culture receives poetry, what poetic forms and approaches work best, and be careful not to sacrifice impact, understandability and general likeability in the process.

17. Alter, *Hebrew Bible*, 1:xxxvi.

APPENDIX A

SURVEY

Comparing Different Bible Translations Participant Survey

This questionnaire is designed to explore which sorts of Bible translations readers prefer. The information you provide will be helpful for understanding reader preferences and may help in giving feedback to Bible translators. This study is being conducted by Thomas Hemphill, a Doctor of Ministry student at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. Please be assured that all of your answers will be kept strictly confidential. The information that you provide will be presented only in summary form, in combination with the responses of other participants in this study. The answers that you give will never be linked with your name. By completing this questionnaire, you have given your consent that you are a voluntary participant in this study.

INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

Project Title: Readers' responses to different Bible translations
Principal Investigator: Thomas Hemphill, Doctor of Ministry student

PURPOSE

This is a research study. The purpose of this research study is to assess how members of the public perceive the various ways different Bible versions translate passages from the Old Testament. This will help inform Bible translators as to what literary styles might be most effective in accurately conveying the message of the original to modern English-speaking audiences. The purpose of this consent form is to give you the information you will need to help you decide whether to be in the study or not. You may ask any questions about the research, what you will be asked to do, the possible risks and benefits, your rights as a volunteer, and anything else about the research or this form that is not clear.

We are inviting you to participate in this research study because you are someone who is fluent in English and who is over 18.

PROCEDURES

If you agree to participate, your involvement will last for the time required to read the passages and complete the questions in this survey. This should take about 30-40 minutes.

The following procedures are involved in this study: Once all participants have returned the survey to me, I will then collate these results. These results will then be used to write up the results and conclusions section of my thesis. After the results have been collated, you are welcome to ask for a copy of the aggregated results as well as a copy of my thesis once it is completed.

RISKS

There are no foreseeable risks involved in participating in this survey.

BENEFITS

The potential personal benefit that may occur as a result of your participation in this study is the enjoyment of reading a few passages from the Old Testament. Society may also benefit from the results

of this survey as it may inform future Bible translators as to what style they use when translating the Old Testament.

COMPENSATION

You will not be compensated for participating in this research project.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Records of participation in this research project will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law. Your name will only be recorded on this particular document and this document will only be held in my office and/or on my computer and/or my back-up devices, all of which are held in a safe place or password secured. Your name will not be recorded in collated data or in my thesis. In the event of any report or publication from this study, your identity will not be disclosed. Results will be reported in a summarized manner in such a way that you cannot be identified.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

Taking part in this research study is voluntary. You may choose not to take part at all. If you agree to participate in this study, you may stop participating at any time. If you decide not to take part, or if you stop participating at any time, your decision will not result in any penalty or loss of benefits to which you may otherwise be entitled, and any data collected from you prior to withdrawal but before the collating of results will be destroyed.

QUESTIONS

Questions are encouraged. If you have any questions about this research project, please contact Thomas Hemphill, at thomas_hemphill@sil.org, or phone 0468 737 191 (+61 468 737 191 for outside Australia). If you have questions about your rights as a participant, please contact the Co-Chair of the Institutional Review Board, David A. Currie, at dcurrie@gordonconwell.edu or phone +1 978 646 4176.

Your signature indicates that this research study has been explained to you, that your questions have been answered, and that you agree to take part in this study. You will receive a copy of this form.

Participant's Name (printed): _____

(Signature of Participant – you may sign electronically)

(Date)

RESEARCHER STATEMENT

I have discussed the above points with the participant. It is my opinion that the participant understands the risks, benefits, and procedures involved with participation in this research study.

(Signature of Researcher)

(Date)

General Questions:

Gender:

Age Group (please underline):

(Please note that for legal reasons you need to be 18 or above to participate in this survey)

18-35

35-55

Over 55

How familiar are you with the Bible?:

Very familiar

Somewhat familiar

Unfamiliar

What country do you currently live in?:

Country of birth:

Mother tongue(s):

Your dialect of English (e.g., Australian, New Zealander, American, etc.):

Instructions

In this survey, you will be asked to read four different translations of several short passages of the Old Testament and then answer some questions about each passage.

*It is really important that you do **NOT** look at any other copy of the Bible when you answer these questions as that would destroy the purpose of this survey. Please **only** read the versions in this survey.*

There are many factors that go into making a Bible translation, accuracy being the most important. Other factors are also important, such as readability. Because the purpose of this survey is to measure readability, please focus on that rather than other factors as you read and answer the questions. Also please don't try and guess what the different versions being used are as you read them, or whereabouts in a particular book the passage might be. If you are curious about such things, I can tell you this information after the survey has been completed!

Please note that after each version name, there is a code number in brackets (e.g., Version A [Code 1234567]). Please ignore this code. It's there to help me record and collate results.

If you know of other people who might be interested in participating in this survey, please let me know. Please don't pass on this survey form to them, as each survey is slightly different. Each survey has the versions in a different order and not all surveys have the same Bible passages. That means that I need to give each participant their own survey.

After you have finished the survey, you can either email it back to me at thomas_hemphill@sil.org, or you can post it back to me at 51 Orana Place, Riverside Tas 7250, Australia.

Thank you for your participation!

Thomas Hemphill

Passage 1 – from Psalms

This passage is taken from the Book of Psalms. Psalms is book of songs praising God.

Version A

[Code 0161414]

For I know that the LORD is great,
and that our Lord is above all gods.
Whatever the LORD pleases, he does,
in heaven and on earth,
in the seas and all deeps.
He it is who makes the clouds rise at the end of the earth,
who makes lightnings for the rain
and brings forth the wind from his storehouses.

Version B

[Code 0161424]

I know that the LORD is great,
that our Lord is greater than all gods.
The LORD does whatever pleases him,
in the heavens and on the earth,
in the seas and all their depths.
He makes clouds rise from the ends of the earth;
he sends lightning with the rain
and brings out the wind from his storehouses.

Version C

[Code 0161332]

I know the greatness of the LORD—
that our Lord is greater than any other god.
The LORD does whatever pleases him
throughout all heaven and earth,
and on the seas and in their depths.
He causes the clouds to rise over the whole earth.
He sends the lightning with the rain
and releases the wind from his storehouses.

Version D

[Code 0161444]

I know that the LORD is great,
Above all gods is our Lord.
All things he desires to do -
in the heavens, on the earth
in the sea, in all the depths
- the LORD does.
From the ends of the earth, he raises the mist,
To go with the rain, he flashes the lightning,
And from his storehouses, he summons the wind.

Passage 1 – Psalms Questions:

1. Do you recognise this passage?

Yes Somewhat No

For the following questions, please answer with A, B, C or D. Please only write **one** answer for each question! If you want to, underneath each question you can write why you gave your answer.

2. Which version did you like the most? _____

Why (optional)? _____

3. Which version did you like the least? _____

Why (optional)? _____

4. Which version had the most impact on you? _____

Why (optional)? _____

5. Which version was the easiest to understand? _____

Why (optional)? _____

6. Which version was the most beautiful or poetic? _____

Why (optional)? _____

7. If you gave a copy of this passage to a friend, which version would you choose? _____

Why (optional)? _____

Passage 2 – From Proverbs

This passage is taken from the Book of Proverbs. As its name implies, Proverbs is a collection of proverbs handy for everyday life.

Version A

[Code 0162828]

As water reflects the face,
so one's life reflects the heart.

Version B

[Code 0162439]

As a face is reflected in water,
so the heart reflects the real person.

Version C

[Code 0162343]

Look to the mirror to see your face,
Look to your heart to see your nature.

Version D

[Code 0162514]

As in water face reflects face,
so the heart of man reflects the man.

Passage 2 – Proverbs Questions:

1. Do you recognise this passage?

Yes Somewhat No

For the following questions, please answer with A, B, C or D. Please only write **one** answer for each question! If you want to, underneath each question you can write why you gave your answer.

2. Which version did you like the most? _____

Why (optional)? _____

3. Which version did you like the least? _____

Why (optional)? _____

4. Which version had the most impact on you? _____

Why (optional)? _____

5. Which version was the easiest to understand? _____

Why (optional)? _____

6. Which version was the most beautiful or poetic? _____

Why (optional)? _____

7. If you gave a copy of this passage to a friend, which version would you choose? _____

Why (optional)? _____

Passage 3 – From Job

This passage is taken from the Book of Job. Job was a man who suffered much. In the Book of Job, Job and his friends ponder why people suffer.

Version A

[Code 0163633]

“God is mighty, but he does not despise anyone!
He is mighty in both power and understanding.
He does not let the wicked live
but gives justice to the afflicted.
He never takes his eyes off the innocent,
but he sets them on thrones with kings
and exalts them forever.

Version B

[Code 0163246]

Surely mighty is God,
Mighty in strength of heart
and not rejecting the innocent.
Not letting the wicked person live,
but giving a fair go to the battler.
Not taking his eyes off the good person
- setting them on thrones with kings!
- forever exalted on high!

Version C

[Code 0163213]

“Behold, God is mighty, and does not despise any;
he is mighty in strength of understanding.
He does not keep the wicked alive,
but gives the afflicted their right.
He does not withdraw his eyes from the righteous,
but with kings on the throne
he sets them forever, and they are exalted.

Version D

[Code 0163628]

“God is mighty, but despises no one;
he is mighty, and firm in his purpose.
He does not keep the wicked alive
but gives the afflicted their rights.
He does not take his eyes off the righteous;
he enthrones them with kings
and exalts them forever.

Passage 3 – Job Questions:

1. Do you recognise this passage?

Yes Somewhat No

For the following questions, please answer with A, B, C or D. Please only write one answer for each question! If you want to, underneath each question you can write why you gave your answer.

2. Which version did you like the most? _____

Why (optional)? _____

3. Which version did you like the least? _____

Why (optional)? _____

4. Which version had the most impact on you? _____

Why (optional)? _____

5. Which version was the easiest to understand? _____

Why (optional)? _____

6. Which version was the most beautiful or poetic? _____

Why (optional)? _____

7. If you gave a copy of this passage to a friend, which version would you choose? _____

Why (optional)? _____

Passage 4 – From Ecclesiastes

This passage is taken from the Book of Ecclesiastes. Ecclesiastes is a book that ponders the meaning of life.

Version A

[Code 0164449]

As a dead fly a perfumer's perfume putrefies,
great wisdom by a little folly is minimised.
The heart of the wise to the right,
The heart of the fool to the wrong.
Even as he goes on his way,
the fool, with a senseless heart,
announces to all, "I am a fool."

Version B

[Code 0164413]

Dead flies make the perfumer's ointment give off a stench;
so a little folly outweighs wisdom and honour.
A wise man's heart inclines him to the right,
but a fool's heart to the left.
Even when the fool walks on the road, he lacks sense,
and he says to everyone that he is a fool.

Version C

[Code 0164521]

As dead flies give perfume a bad smell,
so a little folly outweighs wisdom and honour.
The heart of the wise inclines to the right,
but the heart of the fool to the left.
Even as fools walk along the road,
they lack sense
and show everyone how stupid they are.

Version D

[Code 0164537]

As dead flies cause even a bottle of perfume to stink,
so a little foolishness spoils great wisdom and honour.
A wise person chooses the right road;
a fool takes the wrong one.
You can identify fools
just by the way they walk down the street!

Passage 4 – Ecclesiastes Questions:

1. Do you recognise this passage?

Yes Somewhat No

For the following questions, please answer with A, B, C or D. Please only write **one** answer for each question! If you want to, underneath each question you can write why you gave your answer.

2. Which version did you like the most? _____

Why (optional)? _____

3. Which version did you like the least? _____

Why (optional)? _____

4. Which version had the most impact on you? _____

Why (optional)? _____

5. Which version was the easiest to understand? _____

Why (optional)? _____

6. Which version was the most beautiful or poetic? _____

Why (optional)? _____

7. If you gave a copy of this passage to a friend, which version would you choose? _____

Why (optional)? _____

Passage 5 – from Lamentations

This passage is taken from the Book of Lamentations. It was written after a terrible disaster and in this book the author processes what happened.

Version A

[Code 0165414]

“I have been hunted like a bird
by those who were my enemies without cause;
they flung me alive into the pit
and cast stones on me;
water closed over my head;
I said, ‘I am lost.’

Version B

[Code 0165427]

Those who were my enemies without cause
hunted me like a bird.
They tried to end my life in a pit
and threw stones at me;
the waters closed over my head,
and I thought I was about to perish.

Version C

[Code 0165434]

My enemies, whom I have never harmed,
hunted me down like a bird.
They threw me into a pit
and dropped stones on me.
The water rose over my head,
and I cried out, “This is the end!”

Version D

[Code 0165241]

Stalking me as a snared bird
- for no reason.
Silencing me in a rock-carved reservoir,
closing its lid on me.
Sloshing water over my head I cry,
“It’s the end of me!”

Passage 5 – Lamentations Questions:

1. Do you recognise this passage?

Yes Somewhat No

For the following questions, please answer with A, B, C or D. Please only write **one** answer for each question! If you want to, underneath each question you can write why you gave your answer.

2. Which version did you like the most? _____

Why (optional)? _____

3. Which version did you like the least? _____

Why (optional)? _____

4. Which version had the most impact on you? _____

Why (optional)? _____

5. Which version was the easiest to understand? _____

Why (optional)? _____

6. Which version was the most beautiful or poetic? _____

Why (optional)? _____

7. If you gave a copy of this passage to a friend, which version would you choose? _____

Why (optional)? _____

Passage 6 – From Song of Songs

This passage is taken from the book of Song of Songs. This book is a love story in which two lovers praise each other. In this passage it is the man's turn to speak to his beloved.

Version A

[Code 0166323]

How beautiful you are and how pleasing,
my love, with your delights!
Your stature is like that of the palm,
and your breasts like clusters of fruit.
I said, "I will climb the palm tree;
I will take hold of its fruit."
May your breasts be like clusters of grapes on the vine,
the fragrance of your breath like apples,
and your mouth like the best wine.

Version B

[Code 0166939]

Oh, how beautiful you are!
How pleasing, my love, how full of delights!
You are slender like a palm tree,
and your breasts are like its clusters of fruit.
I said, "I will climb the palm tree
and take hold of its fruit."
May your breasts be like grape clusters,
and the fragrance of your breath like apples.
May your kisses be as exciting as the best wine—

Version C

[Code 0166349]

How beautiful you are!
How lovely you are!
Loving you is sheer delight!
O your figure –
is like a stately date palm tree,
and your breasts like its rounded clusters of sweet fruit!
I intend to climb up this palm tree,
and fondle its fruit!
May your breasts be like rounded clusters of juicy grapes,
and the aroma of your nipples like sweet smelling apples,
and the roof of your mouth taste like the best wine.

Version D

[Code 0166318]

How beautiful and pleasant you are,
O loved one, with all your delights!
Your stature is like a palm tree,
and your breasts are like its clusters.
I say I will climb the palm tree
and lay hold of its fruit.
Oh may your breasts be like clusters of the vine,
and the scent of your breath like apples,
and your mouth like the best wine.

Passage 6 – Song of Songs Questions:

1. Do you recognise this passage?

Yes Somewhat No

For the following questions, please answer with A, B, C or D. Please only write **one** answer for each question! If you want to, underneath each question you can write why you gave your answer.

2. Which version did you like the most? _____

Why (optional)? _____

3. Which version did you like the least? _____

Why (optional)? _____

4. Which version had the most impact on you? _____

Why (optional)? _____

5. Which version was the easiest to understand? _____

Why (optional)? _____

6. Which version was the most beautiful or poetic? _____

Why (optional)? _____

7. If you gave a copy of this passage to a friend, which version would you choose? _____

Why (optional)? _____

APPENDIX B

QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

Individual Results

| Respondent | Demographics | | | Residence country | Birth country | Mother tongue | Dialect |
|------------|--------------|-----------|-------------------|------------------------|------------------------|---------------|------------|
| | Gender | Age group | Familiarity | | | | |
| 01 | Male | Over 55 | Very familiar | Australia | Other English speaking | English | Australian |
| 02 | Male | Over 55 | Very familiar | Other English speaking | Other English speaking | English | Other |
| 03 | Male | Over 55 | Very familiar | Australia | Non English speaking | Other | Australian |
| 04 | Male | Over 55 | Somewhat familiar | Australia | Australia | English | Australian |
| 05 | Female | 18-35 | Very familiar | Australia | Australia | English | Australian |
| 06 | Excluded | | | | | | |
| 07 | Female | Over 55 | Somewhat familiar | Australia | Australia | English | Australian |
| 08 | Male | Over 55 | Very familiar | Non English speaking | Non English speaking | Other | Other |
| 09 | Female | 35-55 | Somewhat familiar | Australia | Australia | English | Australian |
| 10 | Male | Over 55 | Very familiar | Australia | Australia | English | Australian |
| 11 | Male | Over 55 | Very familiar | Australia | Australia | English | Australian |
| 12 | Male | 35-55 | Very familiar | Other English speaking | Other English speaking | English | Other |
| 13 | Male | Over 55 | Very familiar | Non English speaking | Other English speaking | English | Other |
| 14 | Male | Over 55 | Very familiar | Australia | Australia | English | Australian |
| 15 | Female | Over 55 | Very familiar | Australia | Australia | English | Australian |
| 16 | Male | 35-55 | Somewhat familiar | Australia | Australia | English | Australian |
| 17 | Female | Over 55 | Very familiar | Australia | Australia | English | Australian |
| 18 | Female | 18-35 | Very familiar | Australia | Australia | English | Australian |
| 19 | Female | Over 55 | Very familiar | Australia | Other English speaking | English | Australian |
| 20 | Female | Over 55 | Somewhat familiar | Australia | Other English speaking | English | Other |
| 21 | Female | 35-55 | Very familiar | Australia | Other English speaking | English | Other |
| 22 | Male | Over 55 | Unfamiliar | Australia | Australia | English | Australian |
| 23 | Male | Over 55 | Very familiar | Australia | Non English speaking | English | Australian |
| 24 | Male | Over 55 | Very familiar | Australia | Australia | English | Australian |
| 25 | Female | 35-55 | Somewhat familiar | Australia | Australia | English | Australian |
| 26 | Male | Over 55 | Very familiar | Australia | Australia | English | Australian |
| 27 | Female | 35-55 | Very familiar | Australia | Australia | English | Australian |
| 28 | Female | Over 55 | Somewhat familiar | Australia | Australia | English | Australian |
| 29 | Female | 35-55 | Unfamiliar | Other English speaking | Australia | English | Australian |
| 30 | Male | Over 55 | Somewhat familiar | Australia | Australia | English | Australian |
| 31 | Male | 35-55 | Very familiar | Australia | Australia | English | Australian |
| 32 | Male | Over 55 | Very familiar | Non English speaking | Other English speaking | English | Other |
| 33 | Female | 35-55 | Very familiar | Non English speaking | Non English speaking | Other | Other |
| 34 | Female | Over 55 | Very familiar | Australia | Australia | English | Australian |
| 35 | Male | Over 55 | Very familiar | Australia | Other English speaking | English | Australian |
| 36 | Female | Over 55 | Somewhat familiar | Australia | Australia | English | Australian |
| 37 | Female | Over 55 | Very familiar | Australia | Australia | English | Australian |
| 38 | Male | Over 55 | Very familiar | Australia | Other English speaking | English | Other |
| 39 | Male | 35-55 | Very familiar | Australia | Australia | English | Australian |
| 40 | Male | 35-55 | Very familiar | Australia | Australia | English | Australian |
| 41 | Female | 35-55 | Somewhat familiar | Australia | Australia | English | Australian |
| 42 | Male | 35-55 | Somewhat familiar | Australia | Australia | English | Australian |
| 43 | Male | 18-35 | Very familiar | Australia | Australia | English | Australian |
| 44 | Female | Over 55 | Very familiar | Other English speaking | Other English speaking | English | Other |
| 45 | Female | 35-55 | Very familiar | Australia | Australia | English | Australian |
| 46 | Female | 35-55 | Somewhat familiar | Australia | Non English speaking | English | Australian |
| 47 | Female | Over 55 | Very familiar | Australia | Australia | English | Australian |
| 48 | Excluded | | | | | | |
| 49 | Male | 35-55 | Very familiar | Australia | Australia | English | Australian |
| 50 | Male | 35-55 | Somewhat familiar | Australia | Australia | English | Australian |

| Respondent | Demographics | | Familiarity | Residence country | Birth country | Mother tongue | Dialect |
|------------|--------------|-----------|-------------------|------------------------|------------------------|---------------|------------|
| | Gender | Age group | | | | | |
| 51 | Female | 18-35 | Somewhat familiar | Australia | Other English speaking | English | Australian |
| 52 | Male | 35-55 | Very familiar | Other English speaking | Other English speaking | English | Other |
| 53 | Female | Over 55 | Somewhat familiar | Other English speaking | Other English speaking | English | Other |
| 54 | Female | 35-55 | Very familiar | Non English speaking | Other English speaking | English | Other |
| 55 | Female | 35-55 | Unfamiliar | Other English speaking | Australia | English | Australian |
| 56 | Male | Over 55 | Very familiar | Australia | Australia | English | Australian |
| 57 | Female | 18-35 | Very familiar | Australia | Other English speaking | English | Australian |
| 58 | Female | 18-35 | Unfamiliar | Other English speaking | Non English speaking | Other | Other |
| 59 | Female | 35-55 | Very familiar | Australia | Other English speaking | English | Australian |
| 60 | Female | 35-55 | Very familiar | Australia | Australia | English | Australian |
| 61 | Female | Over 55 | Unfamiliar | Other English speaking | Other English speaking | English | Other |
| 62 | Female | 18-35 | Very familiar | Australia | Australia | English | Australian |
| 63 | Female | Over 55 | Somewhat familiar | Australia | Australia | English | Australian |
| 64 | Female | Over 55 | Very familiar | Australia | Australia | English | Australian |
| 65 | Male | Over 55 | Very familiar | Non English speaking | Other English speaking | English | Other |
| 66 | Female | 35-55 | Somewhat familiar | Other English speaking | Other English speaking | English | Other |
| 67 | Female | 18-35 | Very familiar | Australia | Australia | English | Australian |
| 68 | Male | 35-55 | Very familiar | Non English speaking | Other English speaking | English | Other |
| 69 | Male | Over 55 | Very familiar | Australia | Australia | English | Australian |
| 70 | Female | 35-55 | Very familiar | Australia | Australia | English | Australian |
| 71 | Male | 18-35 | Somewhat familiar | Australia | Australia | English | Australian |
| 72 | Female | 18-35 | Unfamiliar | Non English speaking | Non English speaking | Other | Other |
| 73 | Male | 35-55 | Unfamiliar | Non English speaking | Australia | English | Australian |
| 74 | Female | 35-55 | Very familiar | Non English speaking | Non English speaking | Other | Other |
| 75 | Male | 18-35 | Very familiar | Australia | Australia | English | Australian |
| 76 | Male | 35-55 | Very familiar | Australia | Other English speaking | English | Other |
| 77 | Female | 18-35 | Very familiar | Non English speaking | Australia | English | Australian |
| 78 | Female | Over 55 | Unfamiliar | Australia | Australia | English | Australian |
| 79 | Male | 35-55 | Somewhat familiar | Other English speaking | Other English speaking | English | Other |
| 80 | Male | 35-55 | Somewhat familiar | Australia | Australia | English | Australian |
| 81 | Female | 35-55 | Very familiar | Australia | Australia | English | Australian |
| 82 | Female | 35-55 | Very familiar | Australia | Australia | English | Australian |
| 83 | Female | Over 55 | Unfamiliar | Australia | Non English speaking | Other | Australian |
| 84 | Female | 18-35 | Very familiar | Australia | Other English speaking | English | Other |
| 85 | Male | Over 55 | Somewhat familiar | Non English speaking | Non English speaking | Other | Other |
| 86 | Male | 35-55 | Somewhat familiar | Non English speaking | Australia | English | Australian |
| 87 | Male | 18-35 | Somewhat familiar | Australia | Australia | English | Australian |
| 88 | Male | Over 55 | Very familiar | Australia | Australia | English | Australian |
| 89 | Female | Over 55 | Somewhat familiar | Australia | Other English speaking | English | Other |
| 90 | Male | Over 55 | Somewhat familiar | Australia | Australia | English | Australian |
| 91 | Male | Over 55 | Very familiar | Australia | Australia | English | Australian |
| 92 | Female | 35-55 | Somewhat familiar | Australia | Australia | English | Australian |
| 93 | Female | 35-55 | Unfamiliar | Australia | Australia | English | Australian |
| 94 | Female | 35-55 | Somewhat familiar | Australia | Australia | English | Australian |
| 95 | Male | 35-55 | Very familiar | Australia | Non English speaking | Other | Australian |
| 96 | Male | Over 55 | Somewhat familiar | Australia | Australia | English | Australian |

A = ESV

B = NIV

C = NLT

D = Poetic Translation

| Respondent | Psalm 135:5-7 | | | | | | | Proverbs 27:19 | | | | | | |
|------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|-----------|---------------|-----------|-----------|----------------|--------------|---------------|-----------|---------------|-----------|-----------|
| | 1. Recognise | 2. Most like | 3. Least like | 4. Impact | 5. Understand | 6. Poetic | 7. Friend | 1. Recognise | 2. Most like | 3. Least like | 4. Impact | 5. Understand | 6. Poetic | 7. Friend |
| 01 | Yes | B | D | B | B | B | B | Yes | C | A | C | C | C | C |
| 02 | Yes | B | D | B | B | B | B | Yes | C | B | D | C | A | C |
| 03 | Yes | B | C | B | B | B | B | Yes | C | D | C | B | A | B |
| 04 | No | D | A | D | B | C | D | Somewhat | D | B | D | D | A | D |
| 05 | No | C | D | C | C | D | C | Somewhat | C | A | C | D | C | C |
| 06 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 07 | Somewhat | A | B | D | A | D | D | No | A | D | A | C | A | A |
| 08 | Yes | B | A | D | B | D | | Somewhat | C | A | C | C | A | |
| 09 | Somewhat | A | C | A | A | A | A | No | A | B | A | C | A | A |
| 10 | Somewhat | D | C | D | D | D | D | Yes | D | A | D | D | C | D |
| 11 | Somewhat | A | D | A | A | D | A | No | B | A | D | D | A | B |
| 12 | Somewhat | B | D | B | B | D | B | Somewhat | C | D | C | C | A | C |
| 13 | Yes | D | C | D | D | D | C | Yes | B | C | B | B | D | B |
| 14 | Yes | B | A | B | B | | B | No | B | C | B | B | B | B |
| 15 | Yes | C | D | C | C | C | C | Somewhat | C | D | C | C | A | C |
| 16 | No | C | A | C | C | D | C | No | B | D | B | B | B | B |
| 17 | No | C | D | D | C | D | C | No | C | D | B | C | A | C |
| 18 | Somewhat | B | D | A | B | C | C | Yes | B | A | D | B | D | B |
| 19 | Yes | C | D | C | B | C | C | No | A | D | B | B | A | B |
| 20 | Yes | A | D | A | D | A | B | No | C | B | C | C | B | A |
| 21 | Yes | C | A | C | C | D | C | Yes | A | D | A | A | B | B |
| 22 | No | C | A | C | C | C | C | No | C | A | C | C | C | C |
| 23 | Yes | D | B | D | D | D | D | Yes | C | D | C | C | C | C |
| 24 | Yes | D | C | D | D | D | D | Yes | A | B | A | A | A | A |
| 25 | No | D | A | D | D | D | D | No | B | A | B | B | D | D |
| 26 | Somewhat | B | C | B | B | D | A | Somewhat | B | D | B | B | B | B |
| 27 | Yes | C | A | C | B | C | B | Somewhat | B | A | B | B | B | B |
| 28 | Somewhat | B | D | B | C | D | B | Somewhat | C | A | B | D | A | B |
| 29 | No | A | B | A | D | A | A | No | B | A | B | D | B | B |
| 30 | Somewhat | D | B | D | D | D | D | No | D | A | D | D | D | D |
| 31 | Somewhat | C | D | C | B | C | C | No | | | A | D | A | D |
| 32 | Yes | B | A | D | B | D | B | Yes | C | A | C | C | D | C |
| 33 | Somewhat | C | A | C | C | D | C | Yes | C | D | B | C | B | C |
| 34 | Somewhat | B | A | B | B | D | B | No | C | A | A | C | D | C |
| 35 | Yes | B | A | B | B | A | B | Somewhat | D | A | D | D | C | D |
| 36 | No | B | C | B | B | D | B | No | B | A | B | B | A | B |
| 37 | Yes | A | | A | | A | A | Yes | A | D | A | C | A | A |
| 38 | Yes | B | D | B | B | B | B | Yes | B | C | B | B | B | B |
| 39 | Somewhat | C | D | C | B | C | C | Yes | B | A | D | D | B | D |
| 40 | Somewhat | D | A | D | D | B | D | Somewhat | C | A | C | C | A | C |
| 41 | Somewhat | A | B | A | A | D | A | No | B | A | B | B | D | B |
| 42 | No | B | A | D | B | D | B | No | B | A | B | B | B | B |
| 43 | No | B | D | C | B | D | B | No | D | A | D | D | D | D |
| 44 | Yes | B | D | B | B | B | B | Yes | C | A | C | C | D | C |
| 45 | Somewhat | B | D | D | C | D | D | Yes | C | D | C | C | C | C |
| 46 | Somewhat | C | A | C | C | D | C | No | C | A | C | C | D | D |
| 47 | Somewhat | D | C | D | D | A | D | No | C | A | C | C | C | C |
| 48 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 49 | Yes | B | A | B | C | D | B | No | C | A | C | D | A | C |
| 50 | No | A | B | A | A | A | A | No | A | C | A | C | A | A |

A = ESV

B = NIV

C = NLT

D = Poetic Translation

| Respondent | Psalm 135:5-7 | | | | | | | Proverbs 27:19 | | | | | | |
|------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|-----------|---------------|-----------|-----------|----------------|--------------|---------------|-----------|---------------|-----------|-----------|
| | 1. Recognise | 2. Most like | 3. Least like | 4. Impact | 5. Understand | 6. Poetic | 7. Friend | 1. Recognise | 2. Most like | 3. Least like | 4. Impact | 5. Understand | 6. Poetic | 7. Friend |
| 51 | Somewhat | C | D | C | A | C | A | Somewhat | D | C | D | B | B | B |
| 52 | Somewhat | D | A | D | D | D | D | Somewhat | D | A | D | D | A | D |
| 53 | No | A | D | C | A | | D | No | D | B | D | D | D | D |
| 54 | Somewhat | B | A | D | B | D | B | Somewhat | D | B | D | D | A | D |
| 55 | No | D | A | D | B | D | D | No | B | A | B | D | B | B |
| 56 | Yes | C | A | C | C | C | C | Yes | C | A | C | C | C | C |
| 57 | Yes | C | B | C | B | D | C | Somewhat | A | D | A | B | A | B |
| 58 | No | C | B | D | C | C | C | No | D | C | A | D | A | D |
| 59 | Yes | A | B | A | B | C | A | Yes | C | D | C | D | A | C |
| 60 | Somewhat | C | D | C | | C | C | No | D | | C | C | A | C |
| 61 | No | D | A | D | D | D | D | No | B | A | B | B | B | B |
| 62 | Somewhat | B | A | D | B | D | B | Somewhat | C | A | B | C | D | C |
| 63 | Somewhat | C | D | C | B | D | C | No | D | B | D | D | B | D |
| 64 | Somewhat | C | A | C | C | A | C | Yes | D | D | D | C | A | D |
| 65 | Yes | A | B | A | A | A | A | No | B | D | C | C | B | B |
| 66 | No | D | B | D | B | D | D | No | B | A | B | D | B | B |
| 67 | Yes | B | D | C | C | B | C | Somewhat | B | D | B | B | B | B |
| 68 | Somewhat | B | A | D | B | D | B | No | D | B | D | D | B | D |
| 69 | Somewhat | C | D | D | | | | Yes | A | D | C | C | A | A |
| 70 | Somewhat | C | D | B | C | A | C | Yes | C | D | C | C | A | C |
| 71 | No | B | D | B | B | A | B | No | B | D | B | B | A | B |
| 72 | No | C | D | C | B | C | B | No | B | C | D | B | A | D |
| 73 | No | D | A | D | B | C | D | No | B | D | B | C | A | B |
| 74 | Somewhat | C | A | C | D | | C | No | D | | D | D | C | D |
| 75 | Yes | C | A | C | B | D | B | No | D | C | D | B | A | B |
| 76 | Somewhat | C | A | B | B | C | C | No | D | A | C | B | D | D |
| 77 | Yes | C | D | C | B | D | B | No | A | D | A | B | A | A |
| 78 | No | C | B | | C | C | | No | B | C | B | C | B | |
| 79 | Somewhat | C | A | C | C | D | C | No | B | C | B | C | A | B |
| 80 | Yes | A | D | A | B | B | C | Somewhat | C | D | C | C | A | C |
| 81 | Yes | B | D | B | B | D | B | No | C | A | C | C | B | C |
| 82 | Yes | C | D | C | C | C | C | Yes | B | D | B | D | A | B |
| 83 | No | D | B | D | D | | D | No | C | A | C | C | | C |
| 84 | Somewhat | B | D | A | B | C | D | No | C | D | A | C | A | A |
| 85 | Somewhat | D | A | C | D | B | D | Somewhat | A | D | C | D | D | A |
| 86 | Somewhat | A | C | A | | A | A | No | D | A | D | | D | D |
| 87 | No | B | C | D | B | D | B | No | D | A | D | D | B | D |
| 88 | Yes | A | D | A | A | B | A | Yes | A | D | D | A | A | A |
| 89 | Yes | C | A | C | B | D | B | Yes | D | B | A | C | A | C |
| 90 | No | A | C | A | A | C | A | No | D | C | D | D | B | D |
| 91 | Yes | B | D | B | B | B | B | Somewhat | B | A | B | B | C | B |
| 92 | Yes | C | A | C | C | D | C | Yes | C | A | D | C | D | C |
| 93 | No | C | D | C | D | C | C | No | D | C | D | B | D | D |
| 94 | No | A | D | A | B | D | B | No | B | A | D | C | D | C |
| 95 | No | B | C | B | B | D | B | No | B | A | B | B | D | B |
| 96 | No | D | C | D | D | D | D | No | D | A | D | D | D | D |

A = ESV

B = NIV

C = NLT

D = Poetic Translation

| Respondent | Job 36:5-7 | | | | | | | Ecclesiastes 10:1-3 | | | | | | |
|------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|-----------|---------------|-----------|-----------|---------------------|--------------|---------------|-----------|---------------|-----------|-----------|
| | 1. Recognise | 2. Most like | 3. Least like | 4. Impact | 5. Understand | 6. Poetic | 7. Friend | 1. Recognise | 2. Most like | 3. Least like | 4. Impact | 5. Understand | 6. Poetic | 7. Friend |
| 01 | Yes | B | D | B | B | B | B | Yes | C | | C | C | C | C |
| 02 | Yes | C | D | C | C | B | C | Yes | C | D | C | C | A | C |
| 03 | Yes | B | D | B | B | B | B | Yes | A | D | A | A | A | A |
| 04 | No | C | D | B | C | B | C | No | B | D | A | A | A | A |
| 05 | No | C | D | B | B | A | C | No | A | D | A | C | A | A |
| 06 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 07 | No | C | D | A | C | A | C | No | D | A | D | C | D | C |
| 08 | Yes | C | A | D | C | D | | Yes | C | D | B | C | D | |
| 09 | No | C | B | B | D | B | C | No | C | B | C | C | D | C |
| 10 | Yes | D | A | D | D | D | D | Yes | C | D | C | C | B | C |
| 11 | No | C | D | C | C | B | C | No | B | D | A | B | D | B |
| 12 | Somewhat | C | A | | C | D | C | Somewhat | C | B | A | C | D | C |
| 13 | Somewhat | D | A | D | C | D | D | Somewhat | C | D | C | B | D | C |
| 14 | No | C | A | D | C | D | C | Somewhat | C | D | C | C | D | C |
| 15 | Somewhat | C | B | C | C | C | C | Somewhat | C | D | C | C | C | C |
| 16 | Somewhat | C | D | C | B | C | C | Somewhat | B | C | B | D | B | B |
| 17 | Yes | C | D | C | C | D | C | Somewhat | B | A | D | B | D | B |
| 18 | Somewhat | C | A | D | C | B | C | Yes | C | D | | | | |
| 19 | Yes | C | D | C | D | C | C | Somewhat | D | B | B | C | D | D |
| 20 | Somewhat | C | D | B | C | B | C | No | C | D | B | C | A | B |
| 21 | Yes | B | D | C | D | A | A | Yes | D | B | A | D | A | D |
| 22 | No | C | A | C | C | C | C | No | C | D | C | B | B | C |
| 23 | Somewhat | C | D | C | C | B | C | Somewhat | C | D | C | C | B | C |
| 24 | Yes | A | D | A | B | A | B | Yes | D | B | D | D | D | D |
| 25 | Yes | D | A | D | D | D | D | No | C | B | C | C | C | C |
| 26 | Yes | C | D | C | C | A | C | Yes | B | C | B | B | D | B |
| 27 | Somewhat | B | A | B | D | A | D | Somewhat | C | D | C | C | D | C |
| 28 | Somewhat | C | D | C | B | D | B | No | B | D | C | C | D | C |
| 29 | No | B | D | B | B | B | B | No | A | C | A | A | A | A |
| 30 | Somewhat | A | D | A | A | A | A | No | D | C | D | D | D | D |
| 31 | No | C | B | D | C | C | C | No | B | D | C | C | B | C |
| 32 | Yes | C | D | C | C | A | C | Yes | C | D | A | C | A | C |
| 33 | Yes | A | D | C | B | A | C | Yes | A | D | C | C | D | C |
| 34 | Somewhat | C | A | C | C | B | C | Somewhat | B | D | B | B | D | B |
| 35 | Somewhat | C | D | C | C | B | C | Somewhat | A | D | A | A | D | A |
| 36 | No | C | D | C | C | B | C | No | C | D | C | C | D | C |
| 37 | Yes | C | A | C | D | B | C | Yes | B | C | B | A | B | B |
| 38 | Yes | C | D | C | C | C | C | Yes | A | C | A | A | A | A |
| 39 | Somewhat | C | D | C | C | C | C | Somewhat | B | D | B | C | B | B |
| 40 | Somewhat | C | D | D | D | A | D | Somewhat | B | A | B | B | C | B |
| 41 | Somewhat | B | D | B | B | A | B | No | C | A | C | C | D | C |
| 42 | No | C | D | B | C | C | C | No | C | A | D | C | D | C |
| 43 | No | C | D | C | C | A | C | No | B | | B | B | D | B |
| 44 | Yes | C | D | C | C | A | C | Yes | C | D | C | C | D | C |
| 45 | Somewhat | C | A | D | D | D | C | Yes | A | D | C | C | A | C |
| 46 | Somewhat | C | D | C | C | A | C | Yes | C | D | C | C | D | C |
| 47 | Somewhat | C | D | C | C | C | C | No | C | D | C | C | C | C |
| 48 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 49 | Somewhat | C | A | C | C | A | C | Yes | C | D | C | C | D | C |
| 50 | No | A | D | A | D | A | A | No | D | C | D | A | D | D |

A = ESV

B = NIV

C = NLT

D = Poetic Translation

| Respondent | Job 36:5-7 | | | | | | | Ecclesiastes 10:1-3 | | | | | | |
|------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|-----------|---------------|-----------|-----------|---------------------|--------------|---------------|-----------|---------------|-----------|-----------|
| | 1. Recognise | 2. Most like | 3. Least like | 4. Impact | 5. Understand | 6. Poetic | 7. Friend | 1. Recognise | 2. Most like | 3. Least like | 4. Impact | 5. Understand | 6. Poetic | 7. Friend |
| 51 | Somewhat | B | C | B | B | D | B | No | C | D | B | B | A | B |
| 52 | Yes | B | D | B | B | C | B | No | C | D | C | C | D | C |
| 53 | No | B | D | B | B | A | B | No | C | B | C | C | C | C |
| 54 | Somewhat | C | A | D | C | D | C | Somewhat | A | D | A | C | A | C |
| 55 | No | C | D | | D | C | C | | | | | | | |
| 56 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 57 | Somewhat | A | D | A | C | A | C | No | A | D | A | C | A | B |
| 58 | No | D | A | D | D | D | D | No | B | A | B | C | B | C |
| 59 | Yes | C | D | C | D | A | C | Yes | B | D | B | C | D | B |
| 60 | Yes | B | D | C | B | | B | Yes | C | D | C | C | D | C |
| 61 | No | D | C | D | D | D | D | No | C | A | C | C | C | C |
| 62 | Somewhat | C | D | C | C | D | C | Somewhat | B | D | A | A | D | A |
| 63 | No | C | D | C | C | C | C | No | C | B | D | C | D | C |
| 64 | Somewhat | C | D | C | C | B | C | Yes | C | D | B | C | B | C |
| 65 | No | C | D | C | C | A | C | Yes | B | D | C | C | A | B |
| 66 | No | D | A | D | B | D | D | No | A | B | C | C | C | C |
| 67 | Somewhat | B | D | B | B | B | B | Yes | B | C | B | B | D | B |
| 68 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 69 | Yes | C | D | C | C | C | C | Yes | C | D | D | A | D | C |
| 70 | Somewhat | C | D | B | C | B | C | Yes | A | B | A | A | D | A |
| 71 | No | C | D | B | C | B | C | No | C | D | C | C | D | C |
| 72 | No | B | D | B | B | A | C | No | C | B | C | C | A | C |
| 73 | No | B | D | C | D | A | A | No | A | B | B | B | D | D |
| 74 | No | C | D | C | C | C | C | No | C | D | C | C | A | C |
| 75 | Somewhat | A | D | C | C | B | C | Yes | D | B | C | C | D | C |
| 76 | Somewhat | D | A | D | D | C | D | No | A | D | A | C | B | A |
| 77 | No | B | D | B | C | A | B | No | B | D | B | B | A | B |
| 78 | No | C | D | | D | | | No | C | A | | C | | |
| 79 | No | A | B | A | C | A | C | No | C | D | C | C | D | C |
| 80 | Yes | B | D | A | C | B | C | Yes | A | D | A | B | D | B |
| 81 | Somewhat | B | D | B | B | B | B | No | B | D | B | B | B | B |
| 82 | Yes | B | D | C | C | A | B | Yes | D | A | D | C | D | D |
| 83 | No | B | | | | | | No | C | B | C | C | | C |
| 84 | No | A | D | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 85 | Somewhat | C | D | C | C | A | C | Yes | C | A | C | D | C | C |
| 86 | No | A | D | A | | | | No | B | A | B | | D | B |
| 87 | No | D | C | D | D | A | D | No | A | D | A | B | D | A |
| 88 | Somewhat | B | D | C | B | C | B | Yes | A | D | A | C | A | C |
| 89 | Somewhat | C | D | B | D | A | D | Somewhat | C | D | C | C | D | B |
| 90 | No | B | A | B | D | B | B | No | D | B | A | C | A | D |
| 91 | Somewhat | B | D | B | B | C | B | Somewhat | B | D | B | C | B | B |
| 92 | Somewhat | B | A | B | B | D | B | Yes | A | B | D | C | D | C |
| 93 | No | C | D | C | D | A | C | No | D | C | D | C | D | D |
| 94 | Somewhat | C | A | C | D | B | D | No | C | D | C | C | A | C |
| 95 | No | C | D | C | C | C | C | No | D | B | D | C | D | D |
| 96 | No | D | A | D | D | D | D | No | B | A | B | B | B | B |

A = ESV

B = NIV

C = NLT

D = Poetic Translation

| Respondent | Lamentations 3:52-54 | | | | | | | Song of Songs 7:6-9a | | | | | | |
|------------|----------------------|--------------|---------------|-----------|---------------|-----------|-----------|----------------------|--------------|---------------|-----------|---------------|-----------|-----------|
| | 1. Recognise | 2. Most like | 3. Least like | 4. Impact | 5. Understand | 6. Poetic | 7. Friend | 1. Recognise | 2. Most like | 3. Least like | 4. Impact | 5. Understand | 6. Poetic | 7. Friend |
| 01 | Yes | B | D | B | B | B | B | | | | | | | |
| 02 | Yes | A | D | C | A | D | A | Yes | B | D | B | A | A | B |
| 03 | Yes | C | D | A | C | A | C | | | | | | | |
| 04 | Somewhat | B | D | C | B | D | B | No | A | D | D | A | C | A |
| 05 | No | B | D | A | B | B | B | | | | | | | |
| 06 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 07 | No | A | D | A | C | A | A | Somewhat | B | D | B | A | A | B |
| 08 | Yes | B | D | C | C | D | | Yes | C | A | D | C | D | |
| 09 | No | B | A | C | D | D | C | Yes | A | D | C | C | D | A |
| 10 | Yes | C | D | C | C | D | C | Yes | D | A | D | D | B | D |
| 11 | No | C | D | C | C | D | C | | | | | | | |
| 12 | Somewhat | D | B | D | C | D | D | Yes | D | B | D | D | C | D |
| 13 | Yes | A | C | A | A | A | A | Yes | D | C | C | C | C | C |
| 14 | Yes | A | D | A | A | D | A | Yes | C | D | C | C | C | C |
| 15 | No | A | D | A | A | A | A | | | | | | | |
| 16 | Somewhat | B | D | B | B | A | | | | | | | | |
| 17 | Somewhat | D | C | D | A | D | A | | | | | | | |
| 18 | Somewhat | D | C | A | A | A | A | | | | | | | |
| 19 | Yes | B | D | A | A | B | B | | | | | | | |
| 20 | No | C | D | A | C | A | A | | | | | | | |
| 21 | Somewhat | D | | C | C | B | C | | | | | | | |
| 22 | No | C | D | C | C | B | C | No | C | D | D | C | C | C |
| 23 | Yes | C | D | C | C | D | C | Yes | C | D | C | C | C | C |
| 24 | Yes | A | C | A | A | A | A | | | | | | | |
| 25 | No | C | A | D | C | D | C | | | | | | | |
| 26 | No | A | D | A | A | A | A | Yes | B | D | B | D | B | B |
| 27 | Yes | B | A | D | C | D | C | Yes | B | D | B | B | B | B |
| 28 | No | B | D | C | C | D | C | | | | | | | |
| 29 | No | A | B | A | C | A | A | No | B | D | B | | B | B |
| 30 | No | C | D | C | C | D | C | | | | | | | |
| 31 | No | C | D | D | B | A | B | Yes | C | A | D | C | D | C |
| 32 | Yes | C | D | C | C | D | C | Yes | B | A | D | D | D | B |
| 33 | Yes | C | D | C | B | A | C | Yes | C | D | C | C | B | C |
| 34 | Somewhat | A | D | A | A | A | A | | | | | | | |
| 35 | No | B | D | B | B | A | B | | | | | | | |
| 36 | No | C | D | D | D | B | B | No | B | A | B | B | D | B |
| 37 | Somewhat | A | D | A | B | A | A | Yes | A | D | A | C | A | A |
| 38 | Yes | B | D | B | B | B | B | Yes | A | D | A | A | A | A |
| 39 | Yes | B | C | B | C | B | B | Yes | A | D | C | D | A | A |
| 40 | No | C | D | C | C | D | C | Yes | C | D | D | C | A | C |
| 41 | No | A | D | C | B | D | C | Somewhat | C | D | C | C | B | C |
| 42 | No | A | D | A | C | A | A | | | | | | | |
| 43 | Yes | B | D | B | B | D | B | Yes | C | A | D | C | A | C |
| 44 | Yes | B | D | B | B | B | B | | | | | | | |
| 45 | Somewhat | D | A | D | C | D | C | Yes | B | D | B | B | B | B |
| 46 | Somewhat | A | D | C | B | A | B | | | | | | | |
| 47 | Somewhat | B | D | A | B | A | B | No | B | D | A | B | B | B |
| 48 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 49 | No | C | D | A | C | D | C | Yes | B | D | D | B | A | B |
| 50 | No | A | B | A | B | A | A | No | A | D | D | C | A | D |

A = ESV

B = NIV

C = NLT

D = Poetic Translation

| Respondent | Lamentations 3:52-54 | | | | | | | Song of Songs 7:6-9a | | | | | | |
|------------|----------------------|--------------|---------------|-----------|---------------|-----------|-----------|----------------------|--------------|---------------|-----------|---------------|-----------|-----------|
| | 1. Recognise | 2. Most like | 3. Least like | 4. Impact | 5. Understand | 6. Poetic | 7. Friend | 1. Recognise | 2. Most like | 3. Least like | 4. Impact | 5. Understand | 6. Poetic | 7. Friend |
| 51 | No | A | C | A | B | D | A | | | | | | | |
| 52 | Somewhat | B | D | B | B | A | D | Yes | D | A | D | D | C | D |
| 53 | No | B | D | B | B | B | B | | | | | | | |
| 54 | No | C | D | A | C | D | C | Yes | A | D | A | D | A | A |
| 55 | No | A | D | A | B | A | A | No | C | D | | D | C | C |
| 56 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 57 | Somewhat | A | D | A | B | A | A | | | | | | | |
| 58 | No | A | C | A | C | D | A | | | | | | | |
| 59 | Somewhat | C | D | C | A | D | C | | | | | | | |
| 60 | Yes | A | D | A | A | D | A | | | | | | | |
| 61 | No | B | D | B | B | B | B | | | | | | | |
| 62 | Somewhat | C | D | C | C | D | C | Yes | B | D | D | C | A | B |
| 63 | No | C | B | D | C | D | C | No | C | A | C | C | D | D |
| 64 | Yes | B | A | D | B | D | B | Yes | A | D | A | D | C | A |
| 65 | No | A | D | A | A | A | A | Yes | A | B | B | B | A | A |
| 66 | No | C | D | B | D | A | D | No | B | D | D | C | A | B |
| 67 | Somewhat | A | D | A | C | A | A | | | | | | | |
| 68 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 69 | Yes | B | D | B | B | B | B | | | | | | | |
| 70 | Yes | A | D | A | B | A | A | | | | | | | |
| 71 | No | A | D | A | A | A | A | Yes | C | B | C | C | D | C |
| 72 | No | A | D | A | A | C | A | No | D | A | D | C | D | D |
| 73 | No | D | C | D | C | D | D | No | D | A | D | D | | D |
| 74 | No | C | B | C | C | A | C | | | | | | | |
| 75 | Somewhat | C | B | A | B | D | A | Somewhat | C | A | D | C | D | C |
| 76 | Yes | B | A | D | D | B | D | | | | | | | |
| 77 | No | A | D | A | C | A | C | | | | | | | |
| 78 | No | B | A | | B | A | | | | | | | | |
| 79 | No | A | D | C | C | D | A | No | B | D | C | B | A | B |
| 80 | Somewhat | B | D | C | C | D | C | Yes | A | D | C | C | A | B |
| 81 | No | B | D | B | B | D | B | Somewhat | B | D | D | B | C | B |
| 82 | Yes | C | D | C | B | D | C | | | | | | | |
| 83 | No | B | A | B | B | B | B | | | | | | | |
| 84 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 85 | Yes | A | D | A | A | A | A | Yes | A | D | A | A | D | A |
| 86 | No | A | D | A | | A | A | No | D | A | D | | D | D |
| 87 | No | C | D | C | C | C | C | Somewhat | A | D | A | A | A | A |
| 88 | Somewhat | B | D | C | C | D | C | Yes | D | A | D | D | B | D |
| 89 | Somewhat | D | A | D | C | D | C | Yes | C | A | D | | B | C |
| 90 | No | C | B | A | A | C | A | No | D | A | D | D | D | D |
| 91 | Somewhat | B | D | B | B | B | B | | | | | | | |
| 92 | Somewhat | B | A | C | B | D | B | | | | | | | |
| 93 | No | A | B | A | B | D | A | No | A | D | A | D | A | A |
| 94 | No | C | D | C | B | D | B | | | | | | | |
| 95 | No | A | D | A | A | A | A | | | | | | | |
| 96 | No | A | C | A | A | D | A | No | A | D | A | A | A | A |

Aggregate Results

Psalm 135:5-7

| | | | Psalm 135:5-7 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|------------------------|------------|---------------|-----|---------------|-----|-----------|-----|---------------|-----|-----------|-----|-----------|-----|---|---|
| | | | 2. Most like | | 3. Least like | | 4. Impact | | 5. Understand | | 6. Poetic | | 7. Friend | | | |
| | | | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| Overall | A – ESV | | 16 | 17% | 32 | 34% | 16 | 17% | 10 | 11% | 12 | 13% | 13 | 14% | | |
| | B – NIV | | 29 | 31% | 13 | 14% | 19 | 20% | 43 | 48% | 11 | 12% | 30 | 33% | | |
| | C – NLT | | 32 | 34% | 13 | 14% | 30 | 32% | 20 | 22% | 21 | 24% | 28 | 31% | | |
| | D – Poetic | | 17 | 18% | 35 | 38% | 28 | 30% | 17 | 19% | 45 | 51% | 20 | 22% | | |
| Gender | Male | A – ESV | 7 | 16% | 18 | 40% | 7 | 16% | 5 | 12% | 5 | 12% | 7 | 16% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 18 | 40% | 4 | 9% | 13 | 29% | 24 | 56% | 9 | 21% | 17 | 40% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 9 | 20% | 10 | 22% | 9 | 20% | 5 | 12% | 8 | 19% | 9 | 21% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 11 | 24% | 13 | 29% | 16 | 36% | 9 | 21% | 21 | 49% | 10 | 23% | | |
| | Female | A – ESV | 9 | 18% | 14 | 29% | 9 | 19% | 5 | 11% | 7 | 15% | 6 | 13% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 11 | 22% | 9 | 19% | 6 | 13% | 19 | 40% | 2 | 4% | 13 | 27% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 23 | 47% | 3 | 6% | 21 | 44% | 15 | 32% | 13 | 28% | 19 | 40% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 6 | 12% | 22 | 46% | 12 | 25% | 8 | 17% | 24 | 52% | 10 | 21% | | |
| Age | 18-35 | A – ESV | 0 | 0% | 2 | 14% | 2 | 14% | 1 | 7% | 1 | 7% | 1 | 7% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 7 | 50% | 2 | 14% | 1 | 7% | 10 | 71% | 1 | 7% | 7 | 50% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 7 | 50% | 1 | 7% | 8 | 57% | 3 | 21% | 5 | 36% | 5 | 36% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 0 | 0% | 9 | 64% | 3 | 21% | 0 | 0% | 7 | 50% | 1 | 7% | | |
| | 35-55 | A – ESV | 8 | 22% | 18 | 49% | 8 | 22% | 3 | 9% | 5 | 14% | 6 | 16% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 8 | 22% | 5 | 14% | 6 | 16% | 16 | 46% | 2 | 6% | 9 | 24% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 15 | 41% | 3 | 8% | 13 | 35% | 10 | 29% | 9 | 25% | 15 | 41% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 6 | 16% | 11 | 30% | 10 | 27% | 6 | 17% | 20 | 56% | 7 | 19% | | |
| | Over 55 | A – ESV | 8 | 19% | 12 | 29% | 6 | 14% | 6 | 15% | 6 | 15% | 6 | 15% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 14 | 33% | 6 | 14% | 12 | 29% | 17 | 41% | 8 | 21% | 14 | 35% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 10 | 23% | 9 | 21% | 9 | 21% | 7 | 17% | 7 | 18% | 8 | 20% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 11 | 26% | 15 | 36% | 15 | 36% | 11 | 27% | 18 | 46% | 12 | 30% | | |
| Familiarity | Very familiar | A – ESV | 5 | 9% | 19 | 35% | 7 | 13% | 3 | 6% | 6 | 11% | 6 | 11% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 24 | 43% | 4 | 7% | 16 | 29% | 30 | 57% | 9 | 17% | 21 | 39% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 20 | 36% | 7 | 13% | 18 | 32% | 12 | 23% | 12 | 23% | 19 | 35% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 7 | 13% | 25 | 45% | 15 | 27% | 8 | 15% | 26 | 49% | 8 | 15% | | |
| | Somewhat familiar | A – ESV | 10 | 36% | 9 | 32% | 8 | 29% | 7 | 26% | 5 | 19% | 6 | 21% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 5 | 18% | 5 | 18% | 3 | 11% | 10 | 37% | 2 | 7% | 8 | 29% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 7 | 25% | 6 | 21% | 9 | 32% | 5 | 19% | 3 | 11% | 6 | 21% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 6 | 21% | 8 | 29% | 8 | 29% | 5 | 19% | 17 | 63% | 8 | 29% | | |
| | Unfamiliar | A – ESV | 1 | 10% | 4 | 40% | 1 | 11% | 0 | 0% | 1 | 11% | 1 | 11% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 0 | 0% | 4 | 40% | 0 | 0% | 3 | 30% | 0 | 0% | 1 | 11% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 5 | 50% | 0 | 0% | 3 | 33% | 3 | 30% | 6 | 67% | 3 | 33% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 4 | 40% | 2 | 20% | 5 | 56% | 4 | 40% | 2 | 22% | 4 | 44% | | |
| Residence Country | Australia | A – ESV | 12 | 17% | 20 | 29% | 13 | 19% | 8 | 12% | 9 | 13% | 10 | 15% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 22 | 31% | 9 | 13% | 16 | 23% | 31 | 46% | 8 | 12% | 22 | 32% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 26 | 37% | 11 | 16% | 23 | 33% | 17 | 25% | 18 | 27% | 23 | 34% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 10 | 14% | 29 | 42% | 17 | 25% | 11 | 16% | 32 | 48% | 13 | 19% | | |
| | Other English speaking | A – ESV | 2 | 18% | 4 | 36% | 1 | 9% | 1 | 9% | 1 | 10% | 1 | 9% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 3 | 27% | 3 | 27% | 3 | 27% | 5 | 45% | 2 | 20% | 3 | 27% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 2 | 18% | 0 | 0% | 2 | 18% | 2 | 18% | 1 | 10% | 2 | 18% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 4 | 36% | 4 | 36% | 5 | 45% | 3 | 27% | 6 | 60% | 5 | 45% | | |
| | Non English speaking | A – ESV | 2 | 15% | 8 | 62% | 2 | 15% | 1 | 8% | 2 | 17% | 2 | 17% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 4 | 31% | 1 | 8% | 0 | 0% | 7 | 58% | 1 | 8% | 5 | 42% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 4 | 31% | 2 | 15% | 5 | 38% | 1 | 8% | 2 | 17% | 3 | 25% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 3 | 23% | 2 | 15% | 6 | 46% | 3 | 25% | 7 | 58% | 2 | 17% | | |

| | | | Psalm 135:5-7 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------|------------|----------------------|-----|---------------|-----|-----------|-----|---------------|-----|-----------|-----|-----------|-----|--|--|
| | | | 2. Most like | | 3. Least like | | 4. Impact | | 5. Understand | | 6. Poetic | | 7. Friend | | | |
| | | | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | | |
| Birth country | Australia | A – ESV | 12 | 21% | 17 | 30% | 12 | 21% | 7 | 13% | 9 | 16% | 10 | 18% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 16 | 28% | 6 | 11% | 10 | 18% | 23 | 43% | 5 | 9% | 16 | 29% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 20 | 34% | 10 | 18% | 18 | 32% | 15 | 28% | 14 | 25% | 18 | 32% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 10 | 17% | 24 | 42% | 17 | 30% | 9 | 17% | 28 | 50% | 12 | 21% | | |
| | Other English speaking | A – ESV | 4 | 16% | 10 | 40% | 4 | 16% | 3 | 12% | 3 | 13% | 3 | 12% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 10 | 40% | 4 | 16% | 7 | 28% | 16 | 64% | 4 | 17% | 11 | 44% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 7 | 28% | 1 | 4% | 7 | 28% | 2 | 8% | 5 | 21% | 6 | 24% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 4 | 16% | 10 | 40% | 7 | 28% | 4 | 16% | 12 | 50% | 5 | 20% | | |
| | Non English speaking | A – ESV | 0 | 0% | 5 | 45% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 3 | 27% | 3 | 27% | 2 | 18% | 4 | 36% | 2 | 22% | 3 | 30% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 5 | 45% | 2 | 18% | 5 | 45% | 3 | 27% | 2 | 22% | 4 | 40% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 3 | 27% | 1 | 9% | 4 | 36% | 4 | 36% | 5 | 56% | 3 | 30% | | |
| Mother tongue | English | A – ESV | 16 | 19% | 28 | 33% | 16 | 19% | 10 | 12% | 12 | 15% | 13 | 16% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 26 | 31% | 11 | 13% | 17 | 20% | 39 | 48% | 9 | 11% | 27 | 33% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 28 | 33% | 11 | 13% | 26 | 31% | 18 | 22% | 19 | 23% | 25 | 30% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 15 | 18% | 34 | 40% | 25 | 30% | 14 | 17% | 42 | 51% | 18 | 22% | | |
| | Other | A – ESV | 0 | 0% | 4 | 44% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 3 | 33% | 2 | 22% | 2 | 22% | 4 | 44% | 2 | 29% | 3 | 38% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 4 | 44% | 2 | 22% | 4 | 44% | 2 | 22% | 2 | 29% | 3 | 38% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 2 | 22% | 1 | 11% | 3 | 33% | 3 | 33% | 3 | 43% | 2 | 25% | | |
| Dialect | Australian | A – ESV | 13 | 19% | 19 | 28% | 13 | 19% | 8 | 12% | 10 | 15% | 12 | 18% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 20 | 29% | 10 | 15% | 14 | 21% | 30 | 46% | 7 | 11% | 20 | 30% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 24 | 35% | 12 | 18% | 22 | 32% | 16 | 25% | 17 | 26% | 21 | 31% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 12 | 17% | 27 | 40% | 19 | 28% | 11 | 17% | 32 | 48% | 14 | 21% | | |
| | Other | A – ESV | 3 | 12% | 13 | 52% | 3 | 12% | 2 | 8% | 2 | 9% | 1 | 4% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 9 | 36% | 3 | 12% | 5 | 20% | 13 | 52% | 4 | 17% | 10 | 42% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 8 | 32% | 1 | 4% | 8 | 32% | 4 | 16% | 4 | 17% | 7 | 29% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 5 | 20% | 8 | 32% | 9 | 36% | 6 | 24% | 13 | 57% | 6 | 25% | | |
| Passage recognition | Yes | A – ESV | 6 | 18% | 11 | 34% | 6 | 18% | 2 | 6% | 4 | 13% | 4 | 13% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 13 | 39% | 4 | 13% | 10 | 30% | 19 | 59% | 9 | 28% | 16 | 50% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 11 | 33% | 3 | 9% | 12 | 36% | 7 | 22% | 6 | 19% | 10 | 31% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 3 | 9% | 14 | 44% | 5 | 15% | 4 | 13% | 13 | 41% | 2 | 6% | | |
| | Somewhat | A – ESV | 5 | 15% | 13 | 38% | 6 | 18% | 5 | 16% | 5 | 16% | 6 | 18% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 10 | 29% | 3 | 9% | 6 | 18% | 12 | 39% | 2 | 6% | 6 | 18% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 13 | 38% | 5 | 15% | 11 | 32% | 7 | 23% | 7 | 22% | 12 | 36% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 6 | 18% | 13 | 38% | 11 | 32% | 7 | 23% | 18 | 56% | 9 | 27% | | |
| | No | A – ESV | 5 | 19% | 8 | 30% | 4 | 15% | 3 | 11% | 3 | 12% | 3 | 12% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 6 | 22% | 6 | 22% | 3 | 12% | 12 | 44% | 0 | 0% | 8 | 31% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 8 | 30% | 5 | 19% | 7 | 27% | 6 | 22% | 8 | 32% | 6 | 23% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 8 | 30% | 8 | 30% | 12 | 46% | 6 | 22% | 14 | 56% | 9 | 35% | | |

Proverbs 27:19

| | | | Proverbs 27:19 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|------------------------|------------|----------------|-----|---------------|-----|-----------|-----|---------------|-----|-----------|-----|-----------|-----|--|--|
| | | | 2. Most like | | 3. Least like | | 4. Impact | | 5. Understand | | 6. Poetic | | 7. Friend | | | |
| | | | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | | |
| Overall | A – ESV | | 12 | 13% | 41 | 45% | 13 | 14% | 3 | 3% | 39 | 42% | 11 | 12% | | |
| | B – NIV | | 28 | 30% | 10 | 11% | 27 | 29% | 25 | 27% | 23 | 25% | 30 | 33% | | |
| | C – NLT | | 30 | 32% | 12 | 13% | 27 | 29% | 38 | 41% | 11 | 12% | 27 | 29% | | |
| | D – Poetic | | 23 | 25% | 28 | 31% | 27 | 29% | 27 | 29% | 20 | 22% | 24 | 26% | | |
| Gender | Male | A – ESV | 5 | 11% | 21 | 48% | 3 | 7% | 2 | 5% | 19 | 42% | 5 | 11% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 14 | 32% | 4 | 9% | 11 | 24% | 12 | 27% | 10 | 22% | 15 | 34% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 12 | 27% | 7 | 16% | 15 | 33% | 15 | 34% | 7 | 16% | 10 | 23% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 13 | 30% | 12 | 27% | 16 | 36% | 15 | 34% | 9 | 20% | 14 | 32% | | |
| | Female | A – ESV | 7 | 14% | 20 | 43% | 10 | 20% | 1 | 2% | 20 | 42% | 6 | 13% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 14 | 29% | 6 | 13% | 16 | 33% | 13 | 27% | 13 | 27% | 15 | 31% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 18 | 37% | 5 | 11% | 12 | 24% | 23 | 47% | 4 | 8% | 17 | 35% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 10 | 20% | 16 | 34% | 11 | 22% | 12 | 24% | 11 | 23% | 10 | 21% | | |
| Age | 18-35 | A – ESV | 2 | 14% | 5 | 36% | 4 | 29% | 0 | 0% | 7 | 50% | 2 | 14% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 4 | 29% | 0 | 0% | 3 | 21% | 8 | 57% | 3 | 21% | 6 | 43% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 3 | 21% | 4 | 29% | 1 | 7% | 2 | 14% | 1 | 7% | 2 | 14% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 5 | 36% | 5 | 36% | 6 | 43% | 4 | 29% | 3 | 21% | 4 | 29% | | |
| | 35-55 | A – ESV | 3 | 8% | 18 | 53% | 4 | 11% | 1 | 3% | 15 | 41% | 2 | 5% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 14 | 39% | 3 | 9% | 13 | 35% | 8 | 22% | 11 | 30% | 12 | 32% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 11 | 31% | 3 | 9% | 11 | 30% | 15 | 42% | 2 | 5% | 12 | 32% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 8 | 22% | 10 | 29% | 9 | 24% | 12 | 33% | 9 | 24% | 11 | 30% | | |
| | Over 55 | A – ESV | 7 | 16% | 18 | 42% | 5 | 12% | 2 | 5% | 17 | 40% | 7 | 17% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 10 | 23% | 7 | 16% | 11 | 26% | 9 | 21% | 9 | 21% | 12 | 29% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 16 | 37% | 5 | 12% | 15 | 35% | 21 | 49% | 8 | 19% | 13 | 32% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 10 | 23% | 13 | 30% | 12 | 28% | 11 | 26% | 8 | 19% | 9 | 22% | | |
| Familiarity | Very familiar | A – ESV | 8 | 15% | 23 | 43% | 8 | 14% | 3 | 5% | 26 | 46% | 6 | 11% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 13 | 24% | 4 | 8% | 13 | 23% | 15 | 27% | 11 | 20% | 17 | 31% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 23 | 42% | 4 | 8% | 21 | 38% | 24 | 43% | 10 | 18% | 21 | 38% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 11 | 20% | 22 | 42% | 14 | 25% | 14 | 25% | 9 | 16% | 11 | 20% | | |
| | Somewhat familiar | A – ESV | 4 | 14% | 13 | 46% | 4 | 14% | 0 | 0% | 10 | 36% | 5 | 18% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 9 | 32% | 6 | 21% | 9 | 32% | 7 | 26% | 8 | 29% | 9 | 32% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 5 | 18% | 4 | 14% | 4 | 14% | 10 | 37% | 0 | 0% | 4 | 14% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 10 | 36% | 5 | 18% | 11 | 39% | 10 | 37% | 10 | 36% | 10 | 36% | | |
| | Unfamiliar | A – ESV | 0 | 0% | 5 | 50% | 1 | 10% | 0 | 0% | 3 | 33% | 0 | 0% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 6 | 60% | 0 | 0% | 5 | 50% | 3 | 30% | 4 | 44% | 4 | 44% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 2 | 20% | 4 | 40% | 2 | 20% | 4 | 40% | 1 | 11% | 2 | 22% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 2 | 20% | 1 | 10% | 2 | 20% | 3 | 30% | 1 | 11% | 3 | 33% | | |
| Residence Country | Australia | A – ESV | 10 | 14% | 32 | 47% | 11 | 16% | 3 | 4% | 29 | 42% | 9 | 13% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 19 | 28% | 6 | 9% | 19 | 27% | 21 | 30% | 16 | 23% | 22 | 32% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 24 | 35% | 8 | 12% | 21 | 30% | 29 | 41% | 10 | 14% | 22 | 32% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 16 | 23% | 22 | 32% | 19 | 27% | 17 | 24% | 14 | 20% | 16 | 23% | | |
| | Other English speaking | A – ESV | 0 | 0% | 6 | 55% | 1 | 9% | 0 | 0% | 5 | 45% | 0 | 0% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 5 | 45% | 2 | 18% | 5 | 45% | 1 | 9% | 4 | 36% | 5 | 45% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 3 | 27% | 2 | 18% | 2 | 18% | 4 | 36% | 0 | 0% | 3 | 27% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 3 | 27% | 1 | 9% | 3 | 27% | 6 | 55% | 2 | 18% | 3 | 27% | | |
| | Non English speaking | A – ESV | 2 | 15% | 3 | 25% | 1 | 8% | 0 | 0% | 5 | 38% | 2 | 17% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 4 | 31% | 2 | 17% | 3 | 23% | 3 | 25% | 3 | 23% | 3 | 25% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 3 | 23% | 2 | 17% | 4 | 31% | 5 | 42% | 1 | 8% | 2 | 17% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 4 | 31% | 5 | 42% | 5 | 38% | 4 | 33% | 4 | 31% | 5 | 42% | | |

| | | | Proverbs 27:19 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------|------------------------|------------|----------------|-----|---------------|-----|-----------|-----|---------------|-----|-----------|-----|-----------|-----|--|--|
| | | | 2. Most like | | 3. Least like | | 4. Impact | | 5. Understand | | 6. Poetic | | 7. Friend | | | |
| | | | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | | |
| Birth country | Australia | A – ESV | 8 | 14% | 29 | 52% | 8 | 14% | 2 | 4% | 25 | 43% | 8 | 14% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 20 | 35% | 4 | 7% | 19 | 33% | 15 | 26% | 14 | 24% | 18 | 32% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 16 | 28% | 6 | 11% | 13 | 22% | 23 | 40% | 7 | 12% | 17 | 30% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 13 | 23% | 17 | 30% | 18 | 31% | 17 | 30% | 12 | 21% | 14 | 25% | | |
| | Other English speaking | A – ESV | 3 | 12% | 8 | 32% | 4 | 16% | 1 | 4% | 10 | 40% | 2 | 8% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 6 | 24% | 6 | 24% | 6 | 24% | 7 | 28% | 8 | 32% | 10 | 40% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 8 | 32% | 4 | 16% | 8 | 32% | 10 | 40% | 2 | 8% | 7 | 28% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 8 | 32% | 7 | 28% | 7 | 28% | 7 | 28% | 5 | 20% | 6 | 24% | | |
| | Non English speaking | A – ESV | 1 | 9% | 4 | 40% | 1 | 9% | 0 | 0% | 4 | 40% | 1 | 10% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 2 | 18% | 0 | 0% | 2 | 18% | 3 | 27% | 1 | 10% | 2 | 20% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 6 | 55% | 2 | 20% | 6 | 55% | 5 | 45% | 2 | 20% | 3 | 30% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 2 | 18% | 4 | 40% | 2 | 18% | 3 | 27% | 3 | 30% | 4 | 40% | | |
| Mother tongue | English | A – ESV | 11 | 13% | 38 | 46% | 12 | 14% | 3 | 4% | 35 | 41% | 10 | 12% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 26 | 31% | 10 | 12% | 25 | 29% | 22 | 26% | 22 | 26% | 28 | 33% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 26 | 31% | 10 | 12% | 23 | 27% | 35 | 42% | 10 | 12% | 25 | 30% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 21 | 25% | 25 | 30% | 25 | 29% | 24 | 29% | 18 | 21% | 21 | 25% | | |
| | Other | A – ESV | 1 | 11% | 3 | 38% | 1 | 11% | 0 | 0% | 4 | 50% | 1 | 13% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 2 | 22% | 0 | 0% | 2 | 22% | 3 | 33% | 1 | 13% | 2 | 25% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 4 | 44% | 2 | 25% | 4 | 44% | 3 | 33% | 1 | 13% | 2 | 25% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 2 | 22% | 3 | 38% | 2 | 22% | 3 | 33% | 2 | 25% | 3 | 38% | | |
| Dialect | Australian | A – ESV | 10 | 15% | 34 | 51% | 9 | 13% | 2 | 3% | 29 | 43% | 8 | 12% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 21 | 31% | 4 | 6% | 21 | 30% | 20 | 29% | 15 | 22% | 23 | 34% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 22 | 32% | 7 | 10% | 19 | 28% | 27 | 40% | 10 | 15% | 21 | 31% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 15 | 22% | 22 | 33% | 20 | 29% | 19 | 28% | 14 | 21% | 16 | 24% | | |
| | Other | A – ESV | 2 | 8% | 7 | 29% | 4 | 16% | 1 | 4% | 10 | 40% | 3 | 13% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 7 | 28% | 6 | 25% | 6 | 24% | 5 | 20% | 8 | 32% | 7 | 29% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 8 | 32% | 5 | 21% | 8 | 32% | 11 | 44% | 1 | 4% | 6 | 25% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 8 | 32% | 6 | 25% | 7 | 28% | 8 | 32% | 6 | 24% | 8 | 33% | | |
| Passage recognition | Yes | A – ESV | 5 | 20% | 8 | 32% | 4 | 16% | 3 | 12% | 11 | 44% | 4 | 16% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 5 | 20% | 3 | 12% | 4 | 16% | 4 | 16% | 4 | 16% | 6 | 24% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 12 | 48% | 2 | 8% | 10 | 40% | 14 | 56% | 5 | 20% | 12 | 48% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 3 | 12% | 12 | 48% | 7 | 28% | 4 | 16% | 5 | 20% | 3 | 12% | | |
| | Somewhat | A – ESV | 2 | 11% | 9 | 47% | 1 | 5% | 0 | 0% | 10 | 53% | 1 | 6% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 4 | 21% | 2 | 11% | 6 | 32% | 6 | 32% | 4 | 21% | 7 | 39% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 8 | 42% | 1 | 5% | 7 | 37% | 6 | 32% | 3 | 16% | 6 | 33% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 5 | 26% | 7 | 37% | 5 | 26% | 7 | 37% | 2 | 11% | 4 | 22% | | |
| | No | A – ESV | 5 | 10% | 24 | 51% | 8 | 16% | 0 | 0% | 18 | 37% | 6 | 12% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 19 | 39% | 5 | 11% | 17 | 34% | 15 | 31% | 15 | 31% | 17 | 35% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 10 | 20% | 9 | 19% | 10 | 20% | 18 | 37% | 3 | 6% | 9 | 18% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 15 | 31% | 9 | 19% | 15 | 30% | 16 | 33% | 13 | 27% | 17 | 35% | | |

Job 36:5-7

| | | | Job 36:5-7 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|------------------------|------------|--------------|-----|---------------|-----|-----------|-----|---------------|-----|-----------|-----|-----------|-----|--|--|
| | | | 2. Most like | | 3. Least like | | 4. Impact | | 5. Understand | | 6. Poetic | | 7. Friend | | | |
| | | | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | | |
| Overall | A – ESV | | 9 | 10% | 21 | 23% | 8 | 9% | 1 | 1% | 29 | 33% | 4 | 5% | | |
| | B – NIV | | 22 | 24% | 4 | 4% | 23 | 26% | 20 | 22% | 23 | 26% | 18 | 21% | | |
| | C – NLT | | 52 | 57% | 3 | 3% | 40 | 46% | 45 | 51% | 18 | 21% | 52 | 60% | | |
| | D – Poetic | | 9 | 10% | 63 | 69% | 16 | 18% | 23 | 26% | 17 | 20% | 13 | 15% | | |
| Gender | Male | A – ESV | 6 | 14% | 10 | 23% | 6 | 14% | 1 | 2% | 13 | 31% | 3 | 7% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 8 | 19% | 2 | 5% | 8 | 19% | 7 | 17% | 11 | 26% | 7 | 17% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 24 | 56% | 1 | 2% | 19 | 45% | 26 | 62% | 12 | 29% | 25 | 61% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 5 | 12% | 30 | 70% | 9 | 21% | 8 | 19% | 6 | 14% | 6 | 15% | | |
| | Female | A – ESV | 3 | 6% | 11 | 23% | 2 | 4% | 0 | 0% | 16 | 36% | 1 | 2% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 14 | 29% | 2 | 4% | 15 | 33% | 13 | 28% | 12 | 27% | 11 | 24% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 28 | 57% | 2 | 4% | 21 | 47% | 19 | 40% | 6 | 13% | 27 | 59% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 4 | 8% | 33 | 69% | 7 | 16% | 15 | 32% | 11 | 24% | 7 | 15% | | |
| Age | 18-35 | A – ESV | 3 | 21% | 2 | 14% | 1 | 8% | 0 | 0% | 6 | 46% | 0 | 0% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 4 | 29% | 0 | 0% | 6 | 46% | 4 | 31% | 4 | 31% | 3 | 23% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 5 | 36% | 2 | 14% | 3 | 23% | 7 | 54% | 0 | 0% | 8 | 62% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 2 | 14% | 10 | 71% | 3 | 23% | 2 | 15% | 3 | 23% | 2 | 15% | | |
| | 35-55 | A – ESV | 4 | 11% | 10 | 28% | 4 | 12% | 0 | 0% | 13 | 38% | 3 | 9% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 11 | 31% | 3 | 8% | 9 | 26% | 9 | 26% | 6 | 18% | 7 | 20% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 18 | 50% | 0 | 0% | 14 | 41% | 13 | 37% | 9 | 26% | 19 | 54% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 3 | 8% | 23 | 64% | 7 | 21% | 13 | 37% | 6 | 18% | 6 | 17% | | |
| | Over 55 | A – ESV | 2 | 5% | 9 | 22% | 3 | 8% | 1 | 2% | 10 | 25% | 1 | 3% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 7 | 17% | 1 | 2% | 8 | 20% | 7 | 17% | 13 | 33% | 8 | 21% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 29 | 69% | 1 | 2% | 23 | 58% | 25 | 61% | 9 | 23% | 25 | 64% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 4 | 10% | 30 | 73% | 6 | 15% | 8 | 20% | 8 | 20% | 5 | 13% | | |
| Familiarity | Very familiar | A – ESV | 5 | 9% | 13 | 24% | 2 | 4% | 0 | 0% | 16 | 31% | 1 | 2% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 12 | 22% | 2 | 4% | 10 | 19% | 11 | 21% | 14 | 27% | 11 | 21% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 34 | 63% | 0 | 0% | 30 | 58% | 33 | 62% | 13 | 25% | 35 | 67% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 3 | 6% | 39 | 72% | 10 | 19% | 9 | 17% | 9 | 17% | 5 | 10% | | |
| | Somewhat familiar | A – ESV | 4 | 14% | 6 | 21% | 6 | 21% | 1 | 4% | 10 | 37% | 2 | 7% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 6 | 21% | 2 | 7% | 11 | 39% | 7 | 26% | 8 | 30% | 6 | 22% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 14 | 50% | 2 | 7% | 7 | 25% | 11 | 41% | 3 | 11% | 13 | 48% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 4 | 14% | 18 | 64% | 4 | 14% | 8 | 30% | 6 | 22% | 6 | 22% | | |
| | Unfamiliar | A – ESV | 0 | 0% | 2 | 22% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 3 | 38% | 1 | 13% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 4 | 40% | 0 | 0% | 2 | 29% | 2 | 22% | 1 | 13% | 1 | 13% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 4 | 40% | 1 | 11% | 3 | 43% | 1 | 11% | 2 | 25% | 4 | 50% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 2 | 20% | 6 | 67% | 2 | 29% | 6 | 67% | 2 | 25% | 2 | 25% | | |
| Residence Country | Australia | A – ESV | 6 | 9% | 15 | 22% | 6 | 9% | 1 | 1% | 19 | 29% | 3 | 5% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 16 | 23% | 3 | 4% | 18 | 27% | 14 | 21% | 21 | 32% | 14 | 21% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 42 | 61% | 2 | 3% | 32 | 48% | 33 | 49% | 15 | 23% | 40 | 61% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 5 | 7% | 48 | 71% | 10 | 15% | 19 | 28% | 10 | 15% | 9 | 14% | | |
| | Other English speaking | A – ESV | 1 | 9% | 3 | 27% | 1 | 11% | 0 | 0% | 3 | 27% | 0 | 0% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 3 | 27% | 1 | 9% | 3 | 33% | 4 | 36% | 2 | 18% | 3 | 27% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 4 | 36% | 1 | 9% | 2 | 22% | 4 | 36% | 2 | 18% | 5 | 45% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 3 | 27% | 6 | 55% | 3 | 33% | 3 | 27% | 4 | 36% | 3 | 27% | | |
| | Non English speaking | A – ESV | 2 | 17% | 3 | 25% | 1 | 8% | 0 | 0% | 7 | 64% | 1 | 10% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 3 | 25% | 0 | 0% | 2 | 17% | 2 | 18% | 0 | 0% | 1 | 10% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 6 | 50% | 0 | 0% | 6 | 50% | 8 | 73% | 1 | 9% | 7 | 70% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 1 | 8% | 9 | 75% | 3 | 25% | 1 | 9% | 3 | 27% | 1 | 10% | | |

| | | | Job 36:5-7 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------|------------------------|------------|--------------|-----|---------------|-----|-----------|-----|---------------|-----|-----------|-----|-----------|-----|--|--|
| | | | 2. Most like | | 3. Least like | | 4. Impact | | 5. Understand | | 6. Poetic | | 7. Friend | | | |
| | | | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | | |
| Birth country | Australia | A – ESV | 5 | 9% | 14 | 25% | 6 | 11% | 1 | 2% | 16 | 30% | 3 | 5% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 14 | 25% | 3 | 5% | 15 | 27% | 12 | 21% | 17 | 31% | 13 | 24% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 34 | 60% | 1 | 2% | 25 | 45% | 27 | 48% | 12 | 22% | 32 | 58% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 4 | 7% | 39 | 68% | 9 | 16% | 16 | 29% | 9 | 17% | 7 | 13% | | |
| | Other English speaking | A – ESV | 3 | 13% | 5 | 21% | 2 | 9% | 0 | 0% | 9 | 39% | 1 | 4% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 5 | 21% | 1 | 4% | 6 | 27% | 5 | 22% | 4 | 17% | 4 | 17% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 12 | 50% | 2 | 8% | 9 | 41% | 12 | 52% | 4 | 17% | 13 | 57% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 4 | 17% | 16 | 67% | 5 | 23% | 6 | 26% | 6 | 26% | 5 | 22% | | |
| | Non English speaking | A – ESV | 1 | 9% | 2 | 20% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 4 | 40% | 0 | 0% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 3 | 27% | 0 | 0% | 2 | 20% | 3 | 30% | 2 | 20% | 1 | 11% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 6 | 55% | 0 | 0% | 6 | 60% | 6 | 60% | 2 | 20% | 7 | 78% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 1 | 9% | 8 | 80% | 2 | 20% | 1 | 10% | 2 | 20% | 1 | 11% | | |
| Mother tongue | English | A – ESV | 8 | 10% | 19 | 23% | 8 | 10% | 1 | 1% | 26 | 33% | 4 | 5% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 19 | 23% | 4 | 5% | 21 | 27% | 17 | 21% | 22 | 28% | 17 | 21% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 48 | 58% | 3 | 4% | 36 | 46% | 41 | 51% | 16 | 20% | 47 | 59% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 8 | 10% | 57 | 69% | 14 | 18% | 22 | 27% | 15 | 19% | 12 | 15% | | |
| | Other | A – ESV | 1 | 11% | 2 | 25% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 3 | 38% | 0 | 0% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 3 | 33% | 0 | 0% | 2 | 25% | 3 | 38% | 1 | 13% | 1 | 14% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 4 | 44% | 0 | 0% | 4 | 50% | 4 | 50% | 2 | 25% | 5 | 71% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 1 | 11% | 6 | 75% | 2 | 25% | 1 | 13% | 2 | 25% | 1 | 14% | | |
| Dialect | Australian | A – ESV | 6 | 9% | 14 | 21% | 7 | 11% | 1 | 2% | 19 | 30% | 3 | 5% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 18 | 26% | 3 | 4% | 18 | 28% | 15 | 23% | 21 | 33% | 16 | 25% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 40 | 59% | 2 | 3% | 31 | 48% | 32 | 48% | 14 | 22% | 39 | 60% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 4 | 6% | 48 | 72% | 9 | 14% | 18 | 27% | 10 | 16% | 7 | 11% | | |
| | Other | A – ESV | 3 | 13% | 7 | 29% | 1 | 5% | 0 | 0% | 10 | 43% | 1 | 5% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 4 | 17% | 1 | 4% | 5 | 23% | 5 | 22% | 2 | 9% | 2 | 9% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 12 | 50% | 1 | 4% | 9 | 41% | 13 | 57% | 4 | 17% | 13 | 59% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 5 | 21% | 15 | 63% | 7 | 32% | 5 | 22% | 7 | 30% | 6 | 27% | | |
| Passage recognition | Yes | A – ESV | 2 | 9% | 4 | 18% | 2 | 9% | 0 | 0% | 8 | 38% | 1 | 5% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 7 | 32% | 0 | 0% | 3 | 14% | 6 | 27% | 5 | 24% | 6 | 29% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 11 | 50% | 0 | 0% | 14 | 64% | 10 | 45% | 4 | 19% | 12 | 57% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 2 | 9% | 18 | 82% | 3 | 14% | 6 | 27% | 4 | 19% | 2 | 10% | | |
| | Somewhat | A – ESV | 3 | 9% | 11 | 31% | 2 | 6% | 1 | 3% | 9 | 26% | 1 | 3% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 8 | 23% | 1 | 3% | 10 | 29% | 9 | 26% | 11 | 31% | 8 | 23% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 22 | 63% | 1 | 3% | 16 | 47% | 19 | 54% | 7 | 20% | 20 | 57% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 2 | 6% | 22 | 63% | 6 | 18% | 6 | 17% | 8 | 23% | 6 | 17% | | |
| | No | A – ESV | 4 | 11% | 6 | 18% | 4 | 13% | 0 | 0% | 12 | 39% | 2 | 6% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 7 | 20% | 3 | 9% | 10 | 32% | 5 | 16% | 7 | 23% | 4 | 13% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 19 | 54% | 2 | 6% | 10 | 32% | 16 | 50% | 7 | 23% | 20 | 65% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 5 | 14% | 23 | 68% | 7 | 23% | 11 | 34% | 5 | 16% | 5 | 16% | | |

Ecclesiastes 10:1-3

| | | | Ecclesiastes 10:1-3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------|------------|----------------------------|-----|---------------|-----|-----------|-----|---------------|-----|-----------|-----|-----------|-----|--|--|
| | | | 2. Most like | | 3. Least like | | 4. Impact | | 5. Understand | | 6. Poetic | | 7. Friend | | | |
| | | | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | | |
| Overall | A – ESV | | 17 | 19% | 12 | 14% | 19 | 22% | 10 | 11% | 20 | 23% | 10 | 11% | | |
| | B – NIV | | 22 | 24% | 17 | 19% | 21 | 24% | 16 | 18% | 13 | 15% | 22 | 25% | | |
| | C – NLT | | 40 | 44% | 9 | 10% | 36 | 41% | 57 | 65% | 9 | 10% | 45 | 52% | | |
| | D – Poetic | | 11 | 12% | 50 | 57% | 12 | 14% | 5 | 6% | 45 | 52% | 10 | 11% | | |
| Gender | Male | A – ESV | 8 | 19% | 5 | 12% | 12 | 28% | 6 | 14% | 8 | 19% | 6 | 14% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 12 | 28% | 6 | 15% | 10 | 23% | 10 | 24% | 9 | 21% | 11 | 26% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 17 | 40% | 5 | 12% | 15 | 35% | 22 | 52% | 3 | 7% | 19 | 45% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 6 | 14% | 25 | 61% | 6 | 14% | 4 | 10% | 23 | 53% | 6 | 14% | | |
| | Female | A – ESV | 9 | 19% | 7 | 15% | 7 | 16% | 4 | 9% | 12 | 27% | 4 | 9% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 10 | 21% | 11 | 23% | 11 | 24% | 6 | 13% | 4 | 9% | 11 | 24% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 23 | 49% | 4 | 9% | 21 | 47% | 35 | 76% | 6 | 14% | 26 | 58% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 5 | 11% | 25 | 53% | 6 | 13% | 1 | 2% | 22 | 50% | 4 | 9% | | |
| Age | 18-35 | A – ESV | 3 | 23% | 1 | 8% | 4 | 33% | 1 | 8% | 5 | 42% | 3 | 25% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 5 | 38% | 2 | 17% | 5 | 42% | 5 | 42% | 1 | 8% | 5 | 42% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 4 | 31% | 1 | 8% | 3 | 25% | 6 | 50% | 0 | 0% | 4 | 33% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 1 | 8% | 8 | 67% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 6 | 50% | 0 | 0% | | |
| | 35-55 | A – ESV | 10 | 29% | 5 | 14% | 7 | 20% | 3 | 9% | 6 | 17% | 3 | 9% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 7 | 20% | 9 | 26% | 7 | 20% | 4 | 12% | 5 | 14% | 7 | 20% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 13 | 37% | 4 | 11% | 15 | 43% | 25 | 74% | 3 | 9% | 19 | 54% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 5 | 14% | 17 | 49% | 6 | 17% | 2 | 6% | 21 | 60% | 6 | 17% | | |
| | Over 55 | A – ESV | 4 | 10% | 6 | 15% | 8 | 20% | 6 | 14% | 9 | 23% | 4 | 10% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 10 | 24% | 6 | 15% | 9 | 22% | 7 | 17% | 7 | 18% | 10 | 25% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 23 | 55% | 4 | 10% | 18 | 44% | 26 | 62% | 6 | 15% | 22 | 55% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 5 | 12% | 25 | 61% | 6 | 15% | 3 | 7% | 18 | 45% | 4 | 10% | | |
| Familiarity | Very familiar | A – ESV | 11 | 21% | 3 | 6% | 14 | 27% | 7 | 13% | 13 | 25% | 7 | 14% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 16 | 30% | 7 | 14% | 14 | 27% | 10 | 19% | 9 | 17% | 15 | 29% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 20 | 38% | 4 | 8% | 19 | 37% | 33 | 63% | 4 | 8% | 24 | 47% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 6 | 11% | 37 | 73% | 5 | 10% | 2 | 4% | 26 | 50% | 5 | 10% | | |
| | Somewhat familiar | A – ESV | 4 | 14% | 6 | 21% | 4 | 14% | 2 | 7% | 5 | 18% | 2 | 7% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 5 | 18% | 7 | 25% | 5 | 18% | 4 | 15% | 2 | 7% | 7 | 25% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 15 | 54% | 3 | 11% | 13 | 46% | 18 | 67% | 4 | 14% | 16 | 57% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 4 | 14% | 12 | 43% | 6 | 21% | 3 | 11% | 17 | 61% | 3 | 11% | | |
| | Unfamiliar | A – ESV | 2 | 22% | 3 | 33% | 1 | 13% | 1 | 11% | 2 | 29% | 1 | 13% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 1 | 11% | 3 | 33% | 2 | 25% | 2 | 22% | 2 | 29% | 0 | 0% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 5 | 56% | 2 | 22% | 4 | 50% | 6 | 67% | 1 | 14% | 5 | 63% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 1 | 11% | 1 | 11% | 1 | 13% | 0 | 0% | 2 | 29% | 2 | 25% | | |
| Residence Country | Australia | A – ESV | 12 | 18% | 8 | 12% | 15 | 23% | 9 | 13% | 12 | 18% | 9 | 14% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 18 | 26% | 12 | 18% | 16 | 24% | 13 | 19% | 12 | 18% | 19 | 29% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 27 | 40% | 8 | 12% | 23 | 35% | 41 | 61% | 5 | 8% | 29 | 44% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 11 | 16% | 38 | 58% | 12 | 18% | 4 | 6% | 36 | 55% | 9 | 14% | | |
| | Other English speaking | A – ESV | 2 | 20% | 2 | 20% | 2 | 20% | 1 | 10% | 2 | 20% | 1 | 10% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 1 | 10% | 3 | 30% | 1 | 10% | 0 | 0% | 1 | 10% | 0 | 0% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 7 | 70% | 1 | 10% | 7 | 70% | 9 | 90% | 3 | 30% | 9 | 90% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 0 | 0% | 4 | 40% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 4 | 40% | 0 | 0% | | |
| | Non English speaking | A – ESV | 3 | 25% | 2 | 17% | 2 | 17% | 0 | 0% | 6 | 50% | 0 | 0% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 3 | 25% | 2 | 17% | 4 | 33% | 3 | 27% | 0 | 0% | 3 | 27% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 6 | 50% | 0 | 0% | 6 | 50% | 7 | 64% | 1 | 8% | 7 | 64% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 0 | 0% | 8 | 67% | 0 | 0% | 1 | 9% | 5 | 42% | 1 | 9% | | |

| | | | Ecclesiastes 10:1-3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------|------------|----------------------------|-----|---------------|-----|-----------|-----|---------------|-----|-----------|-----|-----------|-----|--|--|
| | | | 2. Most like | | 3. Least like | | 4. Impact | | 5. Understand | | 6. Poetic | | 7. Friend | | | |
| | | | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | | |
| Birth country | Australia | A – ESV | 9 | 16% | 9 | 16% | 10 | 19% | 7 | 13% | 8 | 15% | 6 | 11% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 19 | 34% | 9 | 16% | 15 | 28% | 14 | 26% | 10 | 19% | 16 | 30% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 20 | 36% | 8 | 15% | 18 | 33% | 30 | 56% | 4 | 7% | 25 | 46% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 8 | 14% | 29 | 53% | 11 | 20% | 3 | 6% | 32 | 59% | 7 | 13% | | |
| | Other English speaking | A – ESV | 6 | 26% | 1 | 5% | 8 | 35% | 2 | 9% | 9 | 39% | 3 | 13% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 2 | 9% | 5 | 23% | 4 | 17% | 2 | 9% | 1 | 4% | 6 | 26% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 13 | 57% | 1 | 5% | 11 | 48% | 18 | 78% | 4 | 17% | 12 | 52% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 2 | 9% | 15 | 68% | 0 | 0% | 1 | 4% | 9 | 39% | 2 | 9% | | |
| | Non English speaking | A – ESV | 2 | 18% | 2 | 18% | 1 | 9% | 1 | 9% | 3 | 30% | 1 | 10% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 1 | 9% | 3 | 27% | 2 | 18% | 0 | 0% | 2 | 20% | 0 | 0% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 7 | 64% | 0 | 0% | 7 | 64% | 9 | 82% | 1 | 10% | 8 | 80% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 1 | 9% | 6 | 55% | 1 | 9% | 1 | 9% | 4 | 40% | 1 | 10% | | |
| Mother tongue | English | A – ESV | 15 | 19% | 10 | 13% | 18 | 23% | 9 | 11% | 17 | 22% | 9 | 11% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 21 | 26% | 14 | 18% | 19 | 24% | 16 | 20% | 12 | 15% | 22 | 28% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 35 | 43% | 9 | 11% | 31 | 39% | 50 | 63% | 8 | 10% | 39 | 49% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 10 | 12% | 46 | 58% | 11 | 14% | 4 | 5% | 42 | 53% | 9 | 11% | | |
| | Other | A – ESV | 2 | 22% | 2 | 22% | 1 | 11% | 1 | 11% | 3 | 38% | 1 | 13% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 1 | 11% | 3 | 33% | 2 | 22% | 0 | 0% | 1 | 13% | 0 | 0% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 5 | 56% | 0 | 0% | 5 | 56% | 7 | 78% | 1 | 13% | 6 | 75% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 1 | 11% | 4 | 44% | 1 | 11% | 1 | 11% | 3 | 38% | 1 | 13% | | |
| Dialect | Australian | A – ESV | 12 | 18% | 9 | 14% | 13 | 20% | 9 | 14% | 11 | 17% | 8 | 12% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 20 | 30% | 12 | 18% | 18 | 28% | 15 | 23% | 11 | 17% | 19 | 29% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 25 | 37% | 8 | 12% | 22 | 34% | 38 | 58% | 5 | 8% | 29 | 45% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 10 | 15% | 36 | 55% | 12 | 18% | 3 | 5% | 37 | 58% | 9 | 14% | | |
| | Other | A – ESV | 5 | 22% | 3 | 13% | 6 | 26% | 1 | 4% | 9 | 39% | 2 | 9% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 2 | 9% | 5 | 22% | 3 | 13% | 1 | 4% | 2 | 9% | 3 | 14% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 15 | 65% | 1 | 4% | 14 | 61% | 19 | 83% | 4 | 17% | 16 | 73% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 1 | 4% | 14 | 61% | 0 | 0% | 2 | 9% | 8 | 35% | 1 | 5% | | |
| Passage recognition | Yes | A – ESV | 8 | 27% | 2 | 7% | 7 | 24% | 5 | 17% | 8 | 28% | 3 | 11% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 5 | 17% | 5 | 17% | 6 | 21% | 3 | 10% | 3 | 10% | 6 | 21% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 13 | 43% | 4 | 14% | 12 | 41% | 18 | 62% | 2 | 7% | 16 | 57% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 4 | 13% | 18 | 62% | 4 | 14% | 3 | 10% | 16 | 55% | 3 | 11% | | |
| | Somewhat | A – ESV | 2 | 12% | 2 | 12% | 4 | 24% | 2 | 12% | 1 | 6% | 2 | 12% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 7 | 41% | 2 | 12% | 6 | 35% | 4 | 24% | 4 | 24% | 7 | 41% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 7 | 41% | 1 | 6% | 6 | 35% | 10 | 59% | 2 | 12% | 7 | 41% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 1 | 6% | 12 | 71% | 1 | 6% | 1 | 6% | 10 | 59% | 1 | 6% | | |
| | No | A – ESV | 7 | 16% | 8 | 19% | 8 | 19% | 3 | 7% | 11 | 27% | 5 | 12% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 10 | 23% | 10 | 24% | 9 | 21% | 9 | 21% | 6 | 15% | 9 | 21% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 20 | 47% | 4 | 10% | 18 | 43% | 29 | 69% | 5 | 12% | 22 | 52% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 6 | 14% | 20 | 48% | 7 | 17% | 1 | 2% | 19 | 46% | 6 | 14% | | |

Lamentations 3:52-54

| | | | Lamentations 3:52-54 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|------------------------|------------|----------------------|-----|---------------|-----|-----------|-----|---------------|-----|-----------|-----|-----------|-----|--|--|
| | | | 2. Most like | | 3. Least like | | 4. Impact | | 5. Understand | | 6. Poetic | | 7. Friend | | | |
| | | | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | | |
| Overall | A – ESV | | 31 | 34% | 10 | 11% | 37 | 41% | 19 | 21% | 32 | 36% | 33 | 38% | | |
| | B – NIV | | 28 | 31% | 8 | 9% | 15 | 17% | 33 | 37% | 15 | 17% | 22 | 25% | | |
| | C – NLT | | 25 | 27% | 9 | 10% | 26 | 29% | 34 | 38% | 3 | 3% | 28 | 32% | | |
| | D – Poetic | | 7 | 8% | 63 | 70% | 12 | 13% | 4 | 4% | 40 | 44% | 5 | 6% | | |
| Gender | Male | A – ESV | 14 | 33% | 1 | 2% | 16 | 37% | 11 | 26% | 14 | 33% | 16 | 39% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 14 | 33% | 4 | 9% | 9 | 21% | 12 | 29% | 7 | 17% | 9 | 22% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 13 | 30% | 5 | 12% | 14 | 33% | 18 | 43% | 2 | 5% | 12 | 29% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 2 | 5% | 33 | 77% | 4 | 9% | 1 | 2% | 19 | 45% | 4 | 10% | | |
| | Female | A – ESV | 17 | 35% | 9 | 19% | 21 | 45% | 8 | 17% | 18 | 38% | 17 | 36% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 14 | 29% | 4 | 9% | 6 | 13% | 21 | 44% | 8 | 17% | 13 | 28% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 12 | 25% | 4 | 9% | 12 | 26% | 16 | 33% | 1 | 2% | 16 | 34% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 5 | 10% | 30 | 64% | 8 | 17% | 3 | 6% | 21 | 44% | 1 | 2% | | |
| Age | 18-35 | A – ESV | 7 | 54% | 0 | 0% | 10 | 77% | 3 | 23% | 5 | 38% | 8 | 62% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 2 | 15% | 1 | 8% | 1 | 8% | 5 | 38% | 1 | 8% | 2 | 15% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 3 | 23% | 3 | 23% | 2 | 15% | 5 | 38% | 2 | 15% | 3 | 23% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 1 | 8% | 9 | 69% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 5 | 38% | 0 | 0% | | |
| | 35-55 | A – ESV | 12 | 33% | 6 | 17% | 11 | 31% | 3 | 9% | 13 | 37% | 10 | 29% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 9 | 25% | 5 | 14% | 5 | 14% | 14 | 40% | 3 | 9% | 6 | 17% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 11 | 31% | 2 | 6% | 13 | 36% | 15 | 43% | 0 | 0% | 14 | 40% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 4 | 11% | 22 | 63% | 7 | 19% | 3 | 9% | 19 | 54% | 5 | 14% | | |
| | Over 55 | A – ESV | 12 | 29% | 4 | 10% | 16 | 39% | 13 | 31% | 14 | 33% | 15 | 38% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 17 | 40% | 2 | 5% | 9 | 22% | 14 | 33% | 11 | 26% | 14 | 35% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 11 | 26% | 4 | 10% | 11 | 27% | 14 | 33% | 1 | 2% | 11 | 28% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 2 | 5% | 32 | 76% | 5 | 12% | 1 | 2% | 16 | 38% | 0 | 0% | | |
| Familiarity | Very familiar | A – ESV | 15 | 28% | 4 | 8% | 22 | 42% | 14 | 26% | 20 | 38% | 17 | 33% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 18 | 34% | 3 | 6% | 10 | 19% | 19 | 36% | 10 | 19% | 14 | 27% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 15 | 28% | 5 | 10% | 14 | 26% | 19 | 36% | 0 | 0% | 18 | 35% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 5 | 9% | 40 | 77% | 7 | 13% | 1 | 2% | 23 | 43% | 3 | 6% | | |
| | Somewhat familiar | A – ESV | 11 | 39% | 4 | 14% | 10 | 36% | 4 | 15% | 9 | 33% | 11 | 41% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 7 | 25% | 3 | 11% | 3 | 11% | 9 | 33% | 2 | 7% | 6 | 22% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 9 | 32% | 2 | 7% | 11 | 39% | 11 | 41% | 2 | 7% | 9 | 33% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 1 | 4% | 19 | 68% | 4 | 14% | 3 | 11% | 14 | 52% | 1 | 4% | | |
| | Unfamiliar | A – ESV | 5 | 50% | 2 | 20% | 5 | 56% | 1 | 10% | 3 | 30% | 5 | 56% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 3 | 30% | 2 | 20% | 2 | 22% | 5 | 50% | 3 | 30% | 2 | 22% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 1 | 10% | 2 | 20% | 1 | 11% | 4 | 40% | 1 | 10% | 1 | 11% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 1 | 10% | 4 | 40% | 1 | 11% | 0 | 0% | 3 | 30% | 1 | 11% | | |
| Residence Country | Australia | A – ESV | 20 | 29% | 10 | 15% | 27 | 40% | 14 | 21% | 22 | 32% | 23 | 35% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 23 | 34% | 5 | 7% | 10 | 15% | 27 | 40% | 12 | 18% | 19 | 29% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 20 | 29% | 6 | 9% | 20 | 30% | 24 | 35% | 2 | 3% | 23 | 35% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 5 | 7% | 46 | 69% | 10 | 15% | 3 | 4% | 32 | 47% | 1 | 2% | | |
| | Other English speaking | A – ESV | 5 | 45% | 0 | 0% | 3 | 27% | 1 | 9% | 4 | 36% | 5 | 45% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 4 | 36% | 2 | 18% | 5 | 45% | 5 | 45% | 3 | 27% | 3 | 27% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 1 | 9% | 1 | 9% | 2 | 18% | 4 | 36% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 1 | 9% | 8 | 73% | 1 | 9% | 1 | 9% | 4 | 36% | 3 | 27% | | |
| | Non English speaking | A – ESV | 6 | 50% | 0 | 0% | 7 | 58% | 4 | 36% | 6 | 55% | 5 | 45% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 1 | 8% | 1 | 8% | 0 | 0% | 1 | 9% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 4 | 33% | 2 | 17% | 4 | 33% | 6 | 55% | 1 | 9% | 5 | 45% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 1 | 8% | 9 | 75% | 1 | 8% | 0 | 0% | 4 | 36% | 1 | 9% | | |

| | | | Lamentations 3:52-54 | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------|------------|-----------------------------|-----|---------------|-----|-----------|-----|---------------|-----|-----------|-----|-----------|-----|
| | | | 2. Most like | | 3. Least like | | 4. Impact | | 5. Understand | | 6. Poetic | | 7. Friend | |
| | | | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| Birth country | Australia | A – ESV | 20 | 35% | 7 | 12% | 25 | 45% | 11 | 20% | 19 | 34% | 22 | 40% |
| | | B – NIV | 17 | 30% | 6 | 11% | 6 | 11% | 21 | 38% | 6 | 11% | 13 | 24% |
| | | C – NLT | 16 | 28% | 6 | 11% | 16 | 29% | 22 | 39% | 2 | 4% | 19 | 35% |
| | | D – Poetic | 4 | 7% | 38 | 67% | 9 | 16% | 2 | 4% | 29 | 52% | 1 | 2% |
| | Other English speaking | A – ESV | 6 | 26% | 2 | 9% | 7 | 30% | 5 | 22% | 7 | 30% | 7 | 30% |
| | | B – NIV | 9 | 39% | 1 | 5% | 8 | 35% | 9 | 39% | 8 | 35% | 7 | 30% |
| | | C – NLT | 5 | 22% | 2 | 9% | 5 | 22% | 7 | 30% | 0 | 0% | 5 | 22% |
| | | D – Poetic | 3 | 13% | 17 | 77% | 3 | 13% | 2 | 9% | 8 | 35% | 4 | 17% |
| | Non English speaking | A – ESV | 5 | 45% | 1 | 9% | 5 | 45% | 3 | 27% | 6 | 55% | 4 | 40% |
| | | B – NIV | 2 | 18% | 1 | 9% | 1 | 9% | 3 | 27% | 1 | 9% | 2 | 20% |
| | | C – NLT | 4 | 36% | 1 | 9% | 5 | 45% | 5 | 45% | 1 | 9% | 4 | 40% |
| | | D – Poetic | 0 | 0% | 8 | 73% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 3 | 27% | 0 | 0% |
| Mother tongue | English | A – ESV | 27 | 33% | 9 | 11% | 32 | 40% | 16 | 20% | 27 | 33% | 29 | 36% |
| | | B – NIV | 26 | 32% | 7 | 9% | 14 | 17% | 31 | 38% | 14 | 17% | 21 | 26% |
| | | C – NLT | 22 | 27% | 8 | 10% | 23 | 28% | 30 | 37% | 2 | 2% | 25 | 31% |
| | | D – Poetic | 7 | 9% | 57 | 70% | 12 | 15% | 4 | 5% | 38 | 47% | 5 | 6% |
| | Other | A – ESV | 4 | 44% | 1 | 11% | 5 | 56% | 3 | 33% | 5 | 56% | 4 | 50% |
| | | B – NIV | 2 | 22% | 1 | 11% | 1 | 11% | 2 | 22% | 1 | 11% | 1 | 13% |
| | | C – NLT | 3 | 33% | 1 | 11% | 3 | 33% | 4 | 44% | 1 | 11% | 3 | 38% |
| | | D – Poetic | 0 | 0% | 6 | 67% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 2 | 22% | 0 | 0% |
| Dialect | Australian | A – ESV | 24 | 35% | 8 | 12% | 30 | 45% | 14 | 21% | 24 | 36% | 25 | 38% |
| | | B – NIV | 21 | 31% | 6 | 9% | 9 | 13% | 27 | 40% | 9 | 13% | 18 | 27% |
| | | C – NLT | 19 | 28% | 7 | 10% | 19 | 28% | 24 | 36% | 2 | 3% | 22 | 33% |
| | | D – Poetic | 4 | 6% | 47 | 69% | 9 | 13% | 2 | 3% | 32 | 48% | 1 | 2% |
| | Other | A – ESV | 7 | 30% | 2 | 9% | 7 | 30% | 5 | 22% | 8 | 35% | 8 | 36% |
| | | B – NIV | 7 | 30% | 2 | 9% | 6 | 26% | 6 | 26% | 6 | 26% | 4 | 18% |
| | | C – NLT | 6 | 26% | 2 | 9% | 7 | 30% | 10 | 43% | 1 | 4% | 6 | 27% |
| | | D – Poetic | 3 | 13% | 16 | 73% | 3 | 13% | 2 | 9% | 8 | 35% | 4 | 18% |
| Passage recognition | Yes | A – ESV | 7 | 29% | 3 | 13% | 8 | 33% | 7 | 29% | 6 | 25% | 7 | 30% |
| | | B – NIV | 11 | 46% | 0 | 0% | 6 | 25% | 9 | 38% | 7 | 29% | 8 | 35% |
| | | C – NLT | 6 | 25% | 3 | 13% | 7 | 29% | 7 | 29% | 0 | 0% | 7 | 30% |
| | | D – Poetic | 0 | 0% | 18 | 75% | 3 | 13% | 1 | 4% | 11 | 46% | 1 | 4% |
| | Somewhat | A – ESV | 5 | 23% | 3 | 14% | 7 | 32% | 4 | 18% | 9 | 41% | 7 | 33% |
| | | B – NIV | 8 | 36% | 2 | 10% | 3 | 14% | 10 | 45% | 2 | 9% | 5 | 24% |
| | | C – NLT | 3 | 14% | 2 | 10% | 8 | 36% | 8 | 36% | 0 | 0% | 7 | 33% |
| | | D – Poetic | 6 | 27% | 14 | 67% | 4 | 18% | 0 | 0% | 11 | 50% | 2 | 10% |
| | No | A – ESV | 19 | 42% | 4 | 9% | 22 | 50% | 8 | 18% | 17 | 39% | 19 | 43% |
| | | B – NIV | 9 | 20% | 6 | 13% | 6 | 14% | 14 | 32% | 6 | 14% | 9 | 20% |
| | | C – NLT | 16 | 36% | 4 | 9% | 11 | 25% | 19 | 43% | 3 | 7% | 14 | 32% |
| | | D – Poetic | 1 | 2% | 31 | 69% | 5 | 11% | 3 | 7% | 18 | 41% | 2 | 5% |

Song of Songs 7:6-9a

| | | | Song of Songs 7:6-9a | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------|------------|----------------------|-----|---------------|-----|-----------|-----|---------------|-----|-----------|-----|-----------|-----|--|--|
| | | | 2. Most like | | 3. Least like | | 4. Impact | | 5. Understand | | 6. Poetic | | 7. Friend | | | |
| | | | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | | |
| Overall | A – ESV | | 14 | 27% | 15 | 29% | 9 | 18% | 7 | 15% | 18 | 36% | 12 | 24% | | |
| | B – NIV | | 14 | 27% | 3 | 6% | 8 | 16% | 8 | 17% | 10 | 20% | 15 | 30% | | |
| | C – NLT | | 14 | 27% | 1 | 2% | 11 | 22% | 20 | 42% | 10 | 20% | 13 | 26% | | |
| | D – Poetic | | 9 | 18% | 32 | 63% | 22 | 44% | 13 | 27% | 12 | 24% | 10 | 20% | | |
| Gender | Male | A – ESV | 9 | 29% | 11 | 35% | 4 | 13% | 6 | 20% | 12 | 40% | 7 | 23% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 5 | 16% | 3 | 10% | 3 | 10% | 3 | 10% | 3 | 10% | 6 | 20% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 9 | 29% | 1 | 3% | 7 | 23% | 12 | 40% | 7 | 23% | 9 | 30% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 8 | 26% | 16 | 52% | 17 | 55% | 9 | 30% | 8 | 27% | 8 | 27% | | |
| | Female | A – ESV | 5 | 25% | 4 | 20% | 5 | 26% | 1 | 6% | 6 | 30% | 5 | 25% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 9 | 45% | 0 | 0% | 5 | 26% | 5 | 28% | 7 | 35% | 9 | 45% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 5 | 25% | 0 | 0% | 4 | 21% | 8 | 44% | 3 | 15% | 4 | 20% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 1 | 5% | 16 | 80% | 5 | 26% | 4 | 22% | 4 | 20% | 2 | 10% | | |
| Age | 18-35 | A – ESV | 1 | 17% | 3 | 50% | 1 | 17% | 1 | 17% | 3 | 50% | 1 | 17% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 1 | 17% | 1 | 17% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 1 | 17% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 3 | 50% | 0 | 0% | 1 | 17% | 5 | 83% | 0 | 0% | 3 | 50% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 1 | 17% | 2 | 33% | 4 | 67% | 0 | 0% | 3 | 50% | 1 | 17% | | |
| | 35-55 | A – ESV | 6 | 27% | 4 | 18% | 2 | 10% | 0 | 0% | 9 | 43% | 4 | 18% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 7 | 32% | 1 | 5% | 3 | 14% | 5 | 25% | 5 | 24% | 8 | 36% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 5 | 23% | 0 | 0% | 6 | 29% | 8 | 40% | 4 | 19% | 5 | 23% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 4 | 18% | 17 | 77% | 10 | 48% | 7 | 35% | 3 | 14% | 5 | 23% | | |
| | Over 55 | A – ESV | 7 | 30% | 8 | 35% | 6 | 26% | 6 | 27% | 6 | 26% | 7 | 32% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 6 | 26% | 1 | 4% | 5 | 22% | 3 | 14% | 5 | 22% | 6 | 27% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 6 | 26% | 1 | 4% | 4 | 17% | 7 | 32% | 6 | 26% | 5 | 23% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 4 | 17% | 13 | 57% | 8 | 35% | 6 | 27% | 6 | 26% | 4 | 18% | | |
| Familiarity | Very familiar | A – ESV | 6 | 21% | 8 | 29% | 5 | 18% | 2 | 7% | 10 | 36% | 6 | 22% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 9 | 32% | 2 | 7% | 5 | 18% | 6 | 21% | 7 | 25% | 9 | 33% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 8 | 29% | 1 | 4% | 5 | 18% | 11 | 39% | 7 | 25% | 8 | 30% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 5 | 18% | 17 | 61% | 13 | 46% | 9 | 32% | 4 | 14% | 4 | 15% | | |
| | Somewhat familiar | A – ESV | 7 | 41% | 5 | 29% | 3 | 18% | 5 | 33% | 7 | 41% | 5 | 29% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 4 | 24% | 1 | 6% | 2 | 12% | 2 | 13% | 2 | 12% | 5 | 29% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 4 | 24% | 0 | 0% | 6 | 35% | 7 | 47% | 1 | 6% | 3 | 18% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 2 | 12% | 11 | 65% | 6 | 35% | 1 | 7% | 7 | 41% | 4 | 24% | | |
| | Unfamiliar | A – ESV | 1 | 17% | 2 | 33% | 1 | 20% | 0 | 0% | 1 | 20% | 1 | 17% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 1 | 17% | 0 | 0% | 1 | 20% | 0 | 0% | 1 | 20% | 1 | 17% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 2 | 33% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 2 | 40% | 2 | 40% | 2 | 33% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 2 | 33% | 4 | 67% | 3 | 60% | 3 | 60% | 1 | 20% | 2 | 33% | | |
| Residence Country | Australia | A – ESV | 11 | 32% | 9 | 26% | 7 | 21% | 5 | 15% | 13 | 38% | 9 | 26% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 9 | 26% | 1 | 3% | 5 | 15% | 6 | 18% | 8 | 24% | 10 | 29% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 11 | 32% | 0 | 0% | 8 | 24% | 15 | 45% | 6 | 18% | 10 | 29% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 3 | 9% | 24 | 71% | 14 | 41% | 7 | 21% | 7 | 21% | 5 | 15% | | |
| | Other English speaking | A – ESV | 0 | 0% | 1 | 14% | 0 | 0% | 1 | 17% | 3 | 43% | 0 | 0% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 4 | 57% | 1 | 14% | 2 | 33% | 1 | 17% | 1 | 14% | 4 | 57% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 1 | 14% | 0 | 0% | 1 | 17% | 1 | 17% | 3 | 43% | 1 | 14% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 2 | 29% | 5 | 71% | 3 | 50% | 3 | 50% | 0 | 0% | 2 | 29% | | |
| | Non English speaking | A – ESV | 3 | 30% | 5 | 50% | 2 | 20% | 1 | 11% | 2 | 22% | 3 | 33% | | |
| | | B – NIV | 1 | 10% | 1 | 10% | 1 | 10% | 1 | 11% | 1 | 11% | 1 | 11% | | |
| | | C – NLT | 2 | 20% | 1 | 10% | 2 | 20% | 4 | 44% | 1 | 11% | 2 | 22% | | |
| | | D – Poetic | 4 | 40% | 3 | 30% | 5 | 50% | 3 | 33% | 5 | 56% | 3 | 33% | | |

| | | | Song of Songs 7:6-9a | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------|------------------------|------------|----------------------|-----|---------------|-----|-----------|-----|---------------|-----|-----------|-----|-----------|-----|
| | | | 2. Most like | | 3. Least like | | 4. Impact | | 5. Understand | | 6. Poetic | | 7. Friend | |
| | | | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| Birth country | Australia | A – ESV | 10 | 29% | 10 | 29% | 6 | 18% | 4 | 12% | 12 | 35% | 8 | 23% |
| | | B – NIV | 10 | 29% | 1 | 3% | 6 | 18% | 6 | 18% | 8 | 24% | 11 | 31% |
| | | C – NLT | 10 | 29% | 0 | 0% | 7 | 21% | 14 | 42% | 6 | 18% | 9 | 26% |
| | | D – Poetic | 5 | 14% | 24 | 69% | 15 | 44% | 9 | 27% | 8 | 24% | 7 | 20% |
| | Other English speaking | A – ESV | 3 | 27% | 3 | 27% | 2 | 18% | 2 | 20% | 6 | 55% | 3 | 27% |
| | | B – NIV | 4 | 36% | 2 | 18% | 2 | 18% | 2 | 20% | 1 | 9% | 4 | 36% |
| | | C – NLT | 1 | 9% | 1 | 9% | 2 | 18% | 2 | 20% | 3 | 27% | 2 | 18% |
| | | D – Poetic | 3 | 27% | 5 | 45% | 5 | 45% | 4 | 40% | 1 | 9% | 2 | 18% |
| | Non English speaking | A – ESV | 1 | 20% | 2 | 40% | 1 | 20% | 1 | 20% | 0 | 0% | 1 | 25% |
| | | B – NIV | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 1 | 20% | 0 | 0% |
| | | C – NLT | 3 | 60% | 0 | 0% | 2 | 40% | 4 | 80% | 1 | 20% | 2 | 50% |
| | | D – Poetic | 1 | 20% | 3 | 60% | 2 | 40% | 0 | 0% | 3 | 60% | 1 | 25% |
| Mother tongue | English | A – ESV | 13 | 28% | 13 | 28% | 8 | 17% | 6 | 14% | 18 | 39% | 11 | 23% |
| | | B – NIV | 14 | 30% | 3 | 6% | 8 | 17% | 8 | 18% | 9 | 20% | 15 | 32% |
| | | C – NLT | 12 | 26% | 1 | 2% | 10 | 22% | 17 | 39% | 10 | 22% | 12 | 26% |
| | | D – Poetic | 8 | 17% | 30 | 64% | 20 | 43% | 13 | 30% | 9 | 20% | 9 | 19% |
| | Other | A – ESV | 1 | 25% | 2 | 50% | 1 | 25% | 1 | 25% | 0 | 0% | 1 | 33% |
| | | B – NIV | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 1 | 25% | 0 | 0% |
| | | C – NLT | 2 | 50% | 0 | 0% | 1 | 25% | 3 | 75% | 0 | 0% | 1 | 33% |
| | | D – Poetic | 1 | 25% | 2 | 50% | 2 | 50% | 0 | 0% | 3 | 75% | 1 | 33% |
| Dialect | Australian | A – ESV | 10 | 28% | 10 | 28% | 6 | 17% | 4 | 12% | 12 | 34% | 8 | 22% |
| | | B – NIV | 10 | 28% | 1 | 3% | 6 | 17% | 6 | 18% | 8 | 23% | 11 | 31% |
| | | C – NLT | 11 | 31% | 0 | 0% | 8 | 23% | 15 | 44% | 7 | 20% | 10 | 28% |
| | | D – Poetic | 5 | 14% | 25 | 69% | 15 | 43% | 9 | 26% | 8 | 23% | 7 | 19% |
| | Other | A – ESV | 4 | 27% | 5 | 33% | 3 | 20% | 3 | 21% | 6 | 40% | 4 | 29% |
| | | B – NIV | 4 | 27% | 2 | 13% | 2 | 13% | 2 | 14% | 2 | 13% | 4 | 29% |
| | | C – NLT | 3 | 20% | 1 | 7% | 3 | 20% | 5 | 36% | 3 | 20% | 3 | 21% |
| | | D – Poetic | 4 | 27% | 7 | 47% | 7 | 47% | 4 | 29% | 4 | 27% | 3 | 21% |
| Passage recognition | Yes | A – ESV | 9 | 30% | 8 | 27% | 5 | 17% | 3 | 10% | 11 | 37% | 8 | 28% |
| | | B – NIV | 7 | 23% | 3 | 10% | 5 | 17% | 4 | 14% | 7 | 23% | 8 | 28% |
| | | C – NLT | 9 | 30% | 1 | 3% | 8 | 27% | 13 | 45% | 6 | 20% | 9 | 31% |
| | | D – Poetic | 5 | 17% | 18 | 60% | 12 | 40% | 9 | 31% | 6 | 20% | 4 | 14% |
| | Somewhat | A – ESV | 1 | 20% | 1 | 20% | 1 | 20% | 2 | 40% | 2 | 40% | 1 | 20% |
| | | B – NIV | 2 | 40% | 0 | 0% | 1 | 20% | 1 | 20% | 1 | 20% | 2 | 40% |
| | | C – NLT | 2 | 40% | 0 | 0% | 1 | 20% | 2 | 40% | 1 | 20% | 2 | 40% |
| | | D – Poetic | 0 | 0% | 4 | 80% | 2 | 40% | 0 | 0% | 1 | 20% | 0 | 0% |
| | No | A – ESV | 4 | 25% | 6 | 38% | 3 | 20% | 2 | 14% | 5 | 33% | 3 | 19% |
| | | B – NIV | 5 | 31% | 0 | 0% | 2 | 13% | 3 | 21% | 2 | 13% | 5 | 31% |
| | | C – NLT | 3 | 19% | 0 | 0% | 2 | 13% | 5 | 36% | 3 | 20% | 2 | 13% |
| | | D – Poetic | 4 | 25% | 10 | 63% | 8 | 53% | 4 | 29% | 5 | 33% | 6 | 38% |

APPENDIX C

QUALITATIVE RESULTS

Psalm 135:5-7

Respondent number is listed in parentheses after each comment.

| Psalm 135:5-7 | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| 2. Which version did you like the most? | | | |
| It is the best version of Line 3 (07) | Good flow of words (02) | Easiest to follow and understand (05) | Omnipotence is obvious (04) |
| Positive tone, reads well (09) | The poetry and more modern language than A (03) | It flows better and seems to give me a more in depth understanding/feeling. (15) | Most poetic and attractively laid out (13) |
| It seems to be the easiest to read and understand (11) | It is clear, and esp He makes clouds rise is less cumbersome than He causes the clouds.... and, though less poetical, more clear than He raises the mist... (08) | it is the easiest readability to me. Also, while probably more dynamic than literal, I like the separation of our LORD from other gods (rather than all gods) (16) | The Flow (23) |
| It seems more commanding (41) | Flows better, seems more like natural speaking (12) | The structure and language are straightforward and clear. (17) | I like the language and terms used (24) |
| It is the most poetic and concise (50) | Each version had bits I preferred and bits I did not. Overall B seemed to use the clearest English (14) | It's the most majestic. (19) | It says desires note pleases (25) |
| Because it is much more familiar. Others seem like they are adding things to the text. (65) | Seemed natural (not pretentious) (18) | I like the wording better (21) | Clarity of language in the lines 3 to 6. (30) |
| Seemed to flow better in its poetic form (80) | Least complex sentence structure; active voice (26) | It conveys the message in the simplest terms. (22) | 6th line. I like the way it portrays that the LORD does as he desires. (40) |
| This version sounds more dramatic and "biblical" (86) | It feels familiar to me (28) | seem to capture more of the grandeur and greatness of God (27) | Its axiomatic ...unquestionable ...undeniable! (47) |
| Quite direct & clear (88) | It reads better for me, perhaps I know it in this form? (32) | Readable but with some poetic impact (31) | Seems to flow the best (52) |
| CLEARER, MORE DIRECT (90) | Less fussy, more meaning (34) | easiest to read (33) | It is written in English that sounds more familiar (modern) and it is quite poetic. (55) |

| Psalm 135:5-7 | | | |
|----------------------|--|---|--|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| | language flows (35) | the sentences seemed to flow nicer, more poetic? (51) | seems more poetic somehow (66) |
| | It is written is simple language which is easy to understand (36) | It's the English that I speak, and it's the English that I think in. (56) | I liked the verb choices for the actions of the lord- bit more exciting than the others (73) |
| | Seems more clear (42) | It was easy to understand, but still worded poetically to make it sound nice. (57) | easy to understand (83) |
| | It is clearer, seems to get the point across in a simpler way (43) | Seems more elegant and poetic. (58) | Easy to read and understand (85) |
| | Better readability and relevant language (45) | Language simple, descriptive and clear (60) | SHORT, NO WASTAGE OF WORDS, MORE BIBLICAL (96) |
| | It made sense faster than all the others (54) | reads easily (63) | |
| | It was straight forward with simple formatting (62) | Apart from Line 3 it seems the most straightforward in reading (64) | |
| | I think I like the subject at the start of the sentence (67) | Reads more comfortably than the others (69) | |
| | most natural sounding descriptions of the "natural elements/phenomena: Sea, earth, depths, heavens, lightning, etc. (68) | Sentence structure was easier to understand but retains rhythm and poetic style. (70) | |
| | I found it the most readable, and closest to how I use the English language. (71) | The effect of version C is nicely balanced –both epic and pleasant to read. (72) | |
| | Concise, easy to understand. (81) | CONSISTENT AND POSSIBLY MOST FAMILIAR WHICH INFLUENCED (76) | |
| | It would be the closest way to the way I pray/ use words (84) | Readable and like the word choices (77) | |
| | It read simply and clearly (87) | More appealing language (78) | |
| | | It best highlights the Greatness of The Lord and His Powerful, continued involvement in our world. (82) | |
| | | It appeals to my level of English (89) | |

| Psalm 135:5-7 | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| | | | |
| 3. Which version did you like the least? | | | |
| Makes the Lord too arrogant (04) | It is the most everyday and colloquial, and I feel the psalms should have more poetry (07) | Seems less majestic (03) | Clumsy sentence structure (02) |
| D and A are more or less the same, but A is more poetical (08) | More Formal (23) | not sure, clunky (09) | I found it didn't flow clearly (05) |
| In parts it is quite stilted (14) | 'the lord does whatever pleases him' sounds like an instruction (29) | sounds like NIV. Don't like that version (24) | It seems to say things in outdated ways (11) |
| language seems more formal/old fashioned to me (16) | It seems weak (41) | Looser phraseology; appears to be less literal (26) | Unnatural, the word order seems - I don't like dashes (12) |
| No reason, you asked for the least, but they're all very good (21) | It doesn't flow well and seems less reverent (50) | It is not as simply written as the others. Eg It is simpler to say <i>I know that the Lord is great</i> than to say <i>I know the greatness of the Lord</i> (36) | It seemed simplistic and did not flow (15) |
| It uses more awkward and old-fashioned syntax. (22) | It seemed too colloquial; I think that got rid of some of the beauty of the Psalm. (57) | "Causing" the clouds to rise somehow doesn't sound right (86) | The language is more poetic and structure is more complex than the others. (17) |
| He it is (25) | More like an article. (58) | I didn't like line 1 (87) | Seemed unnatural but not poetic (18) |
| I was put off by the words "Lightnings" and deeps (27) | It does not sound as grand as it should. Seems a little like a list. (65) | MORE COMPLEX WORDS (90) | It's a little too stilted and doesn't flow smoothly. (19) |
| Seems a bit awkward (32) | Too modern sounding (66) | TOO LONG. (96) | It is harder to read out aloud (28) |
| sentence structure difficult (33) | | | clauses seemed back to front (31) |
| some awkward sentence structure (34) | | | It is slightly confusing because it mixes up some of the sentences by having the verb second. (43) |
| He it is and who and the plural lightnings sound odd (35) | | | construction seems clumsy (44) |
| He it is who (40) | | | More formal language (45) |
| Seems to trivialise God's majesty with vocabulary and is 'lightnings' a word? (42) | | | more matter of fact and more boring (51) |
| I think the last part | | | Version D only if I had |

| Psalm 135:5-7 | | | |
|--|---------|---------|--|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| of the passage is a little wordy. (46) | | | to pick a version I liked least. All of them I appreciate in their own way. Version D language a bit convoluted (60) |
| Sounds old fashioned and a bit stilted (52) | | | dont like the juxtaposition (63) |
| Some phrases felt awkward, almost like they were “typos” (54) | | | More work to understand the grammar (67) |
| The word choice makes it harder to read which makes it seems less relevant to me. (55) | | | The order of the phrases seemed awkward. (69) |
| There is in "A" and the other 2 Versions as well, phrases that doesn't seem to me to be correct, eg. in Ver. A, the line "who makes lightnings for the rain." Nature doesn't work like that. Therefore I would be very wary of that translation – what else could be wrong? (56) | | | Reads badly for a native English speaker. (70) |
| The formating was frustrating (62) | | | Structure wasn't easily readable (77) |
| Some of the turns of phrase are very olde English on their construction (64) | | | Seemed disjointed in thought and harder to follow the connecting ideas (80) |
| It had constructions that I would never use: “in all deeps” and “lightnings” and which I would consider to be “ill-formed” or ungrammatical. (68) | | | Too wordy and descriptive (81) |
| Felt a bit clunky, wasn't used to the pacing of the prose (73) | | | The phrases feel stilted and back to front. I had to read slowly and carefully, paying close attention |

| Psalm 135:5-7 | | | |
|---|--|---|---|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| | | | and thinking each section through to make sense of the text. (82) |
| Didn't like the word "deeps" and phrase "He it is..." (75) | | | Lacked the depth of the other versions (84) |
| THE USE OF LANGUAGE I.E. LIGHTNINGS FELT IT HADNT BEEN PROPERLY CONSIDERED I TRANSLATION (76) | | | A bit too colloquial (88) |
| The flow of thought is complicated (85) | | | |
| the words He it is (89) | | | |
| | | | |
| 4. Which version had the most impact on you? | | | |
| positive tone, uplifting, seemed to exhalt God more (09) | Good flowing presentation (02) | Because I understood it (05) | States a fact (04) |
| I think because it was the first one I read (18) | The poetry (03) | More in depth, meaningful (15) | Most traditional, most poetic (07) |
| It read poetically to me (29) | I read it first (12) | Words like "throughout", "causes" and "releases" convey His omnipotence and sovereign control. (19) | more poetical (08) |
| It is familiar and concise so that the grandness of the subject seems to come through. (65) | Simplicity of language allows the message to have its impact. (14) | The wording is more profound (21) | It is more dramatic (17) |
| I liked the phrase 'whatever the Lord pleases, He does' – the emphasis on the pleasure / character of God directs His action (80) | Most direct expression allows for profound thought (26) | It was clearer and more straightforward (22) | Easier to digest (23) |
| The way it described why God was able to do what pleased him (84) | Meaning (34) | choice of words were expansive (any other, throughout, whole) and poetic (causes, releases) (31) | I like the way it flows and glorifies God (24) |
| Because it sounds more dramatic and "biblical" (86) | Because it is clearly written (36) | It says "greater than any other god" saying any other seems to have a | Because of the direct language that is used. (30) |

| Psalm 135:5-7 | | | |
|--|---|--|---|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| | | powerful finality to it. (43) | |
| Contrasted with B so reading it was a bit of a jolt (88) | Possibly familiarity. Not sure. (70) | I gained some ideas of what God does in His world. There is the sense that, "that our Lord is greater than any other god." Even more, it is saying to me, there is no other God. A thought also comes to mind that God is in control. He will do what He believes is best for His Creation, after all, if He created it, then He owns it. It follows also that He "owns" us humans as well! (56) | The style was different, more poetic? (32) |
| SEE ANSWER NO 2 (90) | For readability, as stated above. (71) | In straightforward language it tells me about the greatness of my God (60) | As above (40) |
| | READ PERSONALLY CONVINCING AS A STATEMENT OF BELIEF AND FACT (76) | because it is the most straight forward to read. It conveys a clear concept (64) | Because I had to read it twice to understand it and structure reinforces the meaning. (42) |
| | | The phrase "any other god" (67) | Grandeur and poetic language (45) |
| | | See above. It's written as its happening right now: "in the moment". I could Personally join in with these thoughts and agree with them wholeheartedly. (82) | Its clarity (47) |
| | | Sounded like King James version that I grew up reading (85) | It was the most descriptive and brought about the best picture (52) |
| | | It's how I speak (89) | I didn't necessarily like it the most, but I did like the poetic features of D (54) |
| | | | It sounded pretty, though if I were studying it, I would prefer option B because I find it more straight forward (62) |
| | | | The unusual flow of |

| Psalm 135:5-7 | | | |
|---|--|--|---|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| | | | the thoughts necessitated greater concentration to follow the psalmist's meaning (69) |
| | | | As above, felt more dynamic (73) |
| | | | PROBABLY CLOSEST TRANSLATION (96) |
| | | | |
| 5. Which version was the easiest to understand? | | | |
| As above, it got the message across better (09) | Familiarity and seems to reflect who God is more (03) | It flows well and the language is familiar (17) | The direct language used. (30) |
| I think it is because it is not trying to explain things as it goes along. It lets the text speak. (65) | Better grammar (04) | By using the simplest terms (22) | straightforward (52) |
| Same as Ans. 2 (88) | Natural word order (12) | Had a more contemporary feel (28) | They reason above, simple English (85) |
| SEE ANSWER NO 2 (90) | Its sentences were most often structured the way I speak. (14) | Simple language (45) | |
| | The grammar and syntax are more suited to non-English speakers. (19) | For me, it's good English, I understand it! It tells me a whole lot about my God, and I get excited about that. Oh! How I would like to meet Him face to face. Maybe I could say that this passage from Psalms turns me on (to Worship Him) (56) | |
| | Most straightforward language (26) | As above (64) | |
| | easily readable but seemed a bit plain (compared to C, for eg) (31) | Simplest sentence structure? (67) | |
| | As I already wrote, it reads better for me (32) | Removes ambiguity. Simple structure. (70) | |
| | simple wording and sentence construction (36) | Preferred the language (78) | |
| | very simple language (43) | It is written clearly and simply. (82) | |
| | It is concise (62) | | |
| | straightforward (63) | | |
| | It follows the modern | | |

| Psalm 135:5-7 | | | |
|--|--|---|---|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| | word order the most. (72) | | |
| | Simplest language for me (73) | | |
| | I think it is the most familiar to me??? (80) | | |
| | It's how I would use language to talk about God (84) | | |
| | simpler form of english (89) | | |
| | | | |
| 6. Which version was the most beautiful or poetic? | | | |
| more uplifting (09) | "brings out the wind" (67) | Flows well (04) | The language used (eg. summons) (05) |
| It flows along (47) | Again, seemed to flow rhythmically the best. (80) | It flows beautifully. It contains the most exalted words like "greatness", "throughout", "releases" which convey majesty and awe. (19) | see 4 above (07) |
| It is marginally more rhythmic (64) | The flow is different from the rest (85) | Simplicity of phrasing provides a nice rhythm (22) | Pretty words and phrases (mist instead of cloud, "flashes the lightning", etc) (12) |
| It has a cadence about it and a measure of symmetry to the lines. (65) | | It flows from one thought to the next thought easily. In only a few lines the passage tells me so much about our Creator God, of the detail that is there in His Creation. For me the passage speaks my language – the words used, and the way the words are used is beautiful and it is poetry to my heart. I feel satisfied and happy after reading it (56) | The sentence structure reads more like poetry. (17) |
| Rhythm, timing, flow (70) | | Seems most rhythmic (73) | Despite the ease of reading it was the most poetic as well (23) |
| Because it sounds more dramatic and "biblical" (86) | | The sentences, ideas and word pictures flow freely. (82) | Variant structure; imagistic vocabulary; evocative effect (26) |
| | | Descriptive and imaginative (84) | the syntax wasn't usual (28) |
| | | | The simplicity of the use of words also made it poetic. (30) |

| Psalm 135:5-7 | | | |
|---|---|--|--|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| | | | As I already stated (32) |
| | | | some words (flashes, summons) (34) |
| | | | It flows well, like a poem (36) |
| | | | Repetitive ordered structure (42) |
| | | | It is mixed up in an ‘artsy’ way (43) |
| | | | The usage of words such as ‘mist’ and ‘depths’ show a more defined image in the reader’s mind. (62) |
| | | | The last part: “From the ends of the earth, he raises the mist, To go with the rain, he flashes the lightning, And from his storehouses, he summons the wind.” – more interesting verb and noun combinations. (68) |
| | | | The phrases “he raises the mist” and “he flashes the lightning” are very poetic. (75) |
| | | | the rhythm (89) |
| | | | |
| 7. If you gave a copy of this passage to a friend, which version would you choose? | | | |
| as above (09) | Reasons given above (02) | Depending on his native language, he might find it more literal. (13) | For reasons stated above (04) |
| I’d want it to be as easy to understand as possible (11) | The poetry reflects God’s majesty better and it also not difficult to read (03) | Easy to understand and flowed well (15) | D for literary friends, A for less those competent in literature (07) |
| Most balanced combination of direct and poetic expression (26) | I liked it the best (12) | the most contemporary language – easiest to read (16) | But depends on the friend! (24) |
| see above (29) | It uses the simplest language. I think that would be of greatest benefit (14) | For clarity but it would depend on the friend and their enjoyment of literature so I could choose I for its literary merit if my friend were familiar with | The others don’t sound like Psalms (25) |

| Psalm 135:5-7 | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| | | the Bible (17) | |
| For all the above reasons I think it is the most hard hitting. It retains the sense of poetry that is what the Psalms are renowned for. (65) | I like it (28) | See above answers (19) | I would want my friend to have a version that was clear in its interpretation (30) |
| Because it sounds more dramatic and “biblical” (86) | Depends on which friend I was giving it to (32) | Because this is the one I like best (21) | Most impact, poetry (45) |
| MORE ATTENTION GRABBING (90) | Easier to understand (34) | For the reasons stated above (22) | It best conveys God’s majesty and power. (47) |
| | It is clearly wrttein. It is easy to understand. (36) | inspires the imagination and invites wonder (rather than simply communicating information (31) | It is the easiest one to read. (53) |
| | Easy to understand (42) | Because it is easiest to understand (46) | Liked it the most (73) |
| | simple, and to the point (43) | It’s just about all they need to know about God, and it’s easy to understand, straight forward and clear. Mind you, they would need to be introduced to Jesus, the Son of God as well ! (56) | It describes God the most powerful and authroitative way (84) |
| | Well, it depends why I’m giving it.. usually I would give B, but if it was someone who knows the Bible well and appreciates the poetry side of it, then D. (54) | It’s quite understandable, so I wouldn’t doubt they’d misinterpret it; and I liked the way it sounded, so I’d naturally recommend my favourite to a friend. (57) | Easy to read, easy to understand (85) |
| | I found it the easiest to understand. (62) | In straightforward language it tells me about the greatness of my God (60) | |
| | B for general readability, especially for someone with less English. D for someone who is more literary. (68) | as above turns of phrase are easier to follow (64) | |
| | As above. (71) | Hard to misunderstand, simple (67) | |
| | B is the easiest to read and clearly understand, | Especially if the person had poor English skills I would | |

| Psalm 135:5-7 | | | |
|----------------------|--|--|------------|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| | but it would depend on the friend and the occasion. (77) | give them C. It seems clearest to me. (70) | |
| | Simplest (87) | because I liked it most (74) | |
| | easy to understand (89) | Depends on who the friend is, but if they didn't have a bible / church background then I would choose version C as it probably is the most simplest reading (80) | |
| | It is simpler to understand for a non-Christian (94) | It clearly portrays the truest and mightiest representation of God. (82) | |

Proverbs 27:19

| Proverbs 27:19 | | | |
|--|--|--|---|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| 2. Which version did you like the most? | | | |
| Most balanced: face-face in line one, man-man in line 2 (07) | It was easiest to read and understand, and seemed to me to be what the author probably wrote. (11) | Clear (02) | Contains a clearer call to action (04) |
| poetic, message easily understood (09) | It was clear (14) | It has the element of a riddle (03) | Clarity of expression in the verse. (30) |
| It is expressed more emphatically and repetition emphasises the lesson. (19) | I am a little concerned I am wrong here as the other 3 are vice versa – however it is the life/living that is more visible than the heart . Actions come out of the heart (16) | Most poetic (05) | Start with the same word on each line (35) |
| It is easier to understand (21) | makes sense (18) | clear to understand (08) | the passage requires action from the reader and is therefore more interactive (51) |
| Concise and it flows (50) | the second line makes more sense (25) | Most understandable (12) | Not only does it tell me about the principles God has put into place, it instructs me to live life based on action not just belief (60) |
| I liked the way it used 'man' instead of just the more generic 'person' or | Aphoristic force of simple and stark parallelism (26) | I don't have to struggle much to understand it. (17) | easy comparison (63) |

| Proverbs 27:19 | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| 'one'. (57) | | | |
| nicest cadence (69) | simple and beautiful (29) | It best conveys the message (22) | It has a more challenging tone – it invites the reader to evaluate (64) |
| Simple language that I associate with the Old Testament (77) | It expresses the proverb clearly. (36) | The ease of reading and understanding (23) | Metaphors that speak more directly to modern reader. More personal (Pronoun shift to You) (68) |
| Easy and straight forward (85) | Easy to connect (41) | It is in a familiar form but still easy to understand (28) | I could understand it best, it is from my world- I don't see myself often in water (74) |
| Probably most literal to the Hebrew (88) | It seems more consistent with other scripture – but I would need to check it out if presented with others as well (42) | It has the greater meaning for me (32) | IT READS AS SOMETHING TO BE REMEMBERED AND (76) |
| | Most poetic (55) | makes most sense (34) | Because it sounds more poetic (86) |
| | It seems the most poetic, so it would be likely the most memorable (65) | Most understandable (45) | Helped me understand it. (87) |
| | Clearest that life reflects heart (rather than vice versa). Because it's trying to say that the unseen is shown by the seen (67) | It conveys a simple truth simply. (47) | easy to understand (89) |
| | B contains the clearest version of the second line, which to me seems to be the key part of this verse. However, I feel all 4 versions of this passage say slightly different things. (71) | It's plain and simple English, and it says all that needs to be said. I don't need to stop and ask myself "what is this trying to say to me?" (56) | MORE DIRECT. TODAY MORE PEOPLE LOOK IN MIRRORS THAN IN WATER. (90) |
| | Life reflecting one's heart seems more relatable to me than heart reflecting on the man- the second is a process that's (maybe) invisible to all but the subject, but the first is an expression for the world to see. (73) | It makes the most sense (62) | MORE DIRECT (96) |

| Proverbs 27:19 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| | It's practical: my daily living shows my heart attitudes, reflecting who I am. (82) | Clear, concise (70) | |
| | | Emphasis on 'face' and not the 'water' by starting with 'face' (80) | |
| | | Description easy for me to understand without having to re-read. (81) | |
| | | It flowed the easiest and made the most sense to me (84) | |
| | | | |
| 3. Which version did you like the least? | | | |
| Hardest to understand (05) | the word life used instead of heart (02) | That seems confusing to me. (14) | Uses the second person pronoun 'you' (03) |
| not so clear, plus the use of the word 'man' could be awkward for some (08) | Feels clumsy (02) | It sounds like a self help book (50) | It reads an an instruction rather than a philosophy (07) |
| It seemed to say things in old ways. (11) | seemed to have a slightly different meaning (09) | I find the meaning less easy to see (51) | Maybe too personal. I think I like the subject of the phrases being a face and a heart rather than "your" face and "your" nature (12) |
| I like gender neutral language for this kind of thing (18) | Use of the word "life" may be confusing (24) | SOMETHING WRONG WITH METRE (RHYTHM) IN 2ND LINE (90) | even though this seems to be the more contemporary version – I feel it is over simplified (16) |
| It is awkward and confused (22) | cumbersome (63) | | <i>Nature</i> is a bit nebulous. (17) |
| As in water face reflects face is confusing to read (25) | Seems like the meaning is changed – but only in comparing it to the others, not the source text. The others talk about what is inside (unseen) and this one talks about your life – outward actions. (68) | | It doesn't carry the same message of behaviour reflecting what is in the heart. (19) |
| The first line is poetic (28) | too many variables in a person's life at any given time to accurately say life reflects the heart (89) | | The wording seems too casual for such a serious verse (21) |
| reference to man not person (29) | | | It is the least easy to grasp (23) |

| Proverbs 27:19 | | | |
|--|---------|---------|--|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| The first line needs multiple readings to understand what is being said. This is have the passage and effects the reading of the whole passage. (30) | | | Loses impact by getting away from the succinct pithy image. (26) |
| A bit 'wordy' (32) | | | Too interpreted (33) |
| have to read more than once for meaning, sexist (34) | | | I just didn't really like the way it was worded. I preferred the more observational tones of the other 3, over the more command-like tone of version D. (57) |
| Verbose (35) | | | for the above reason (64) |
| It is not as clearly written. (36) | | | Because it loses the hard hitting and memorable "as, so" construction (65) |
| Its confusing - no-one uses the term water face (41) | | | 2nd person. also makes no sense, we can't see hearts... (67) |
| Seems to being trying to be poetic and could be backwards (42) | | | Is less subtle in conveying its message (69) |
| I had to re read it slower to understand it (46) | | | I don't find the use of the second person helpful. This version changes from a passive piece of wisdom to an instruction. (71) |
| It's awkward and non-inclusive____EG. I think of a (male) man when I read it. (47) | | | Prose is a bit dull, plus I prefer the water imagery to the mirror. (73) |
| A bit convoluted (55) | | | Didn't like the sentence structure (77) |
| "As in water face reflects face" that's weird (56) | | | Its abrasive without arousing the need for a self-check and personal response. (82) |
| The repetitive words are distracting (62) | | | The wording and placement seems choppy and not as poetic (84) |
| don't like reference to man twice (66) | | | the way it read does taste mouthful (85) |
| MISSING WORDS | | | Sounds a bit too much |

| Proverbs 27:19 | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| POSSIBLE, GRAMMAR NOT IN PLACE. (76) | | | like popular culture (88) |
| Had to read a few times to get it, particularly first line. (81) | | | |
| It sounds somewhat clumsy (86) | | | |
| took me 3 goes to understand. (87) | | | |
| CLUMSY WORDING (96) | | | |
| 4. Which version had the most impact on you? | | | |
| Narcissus came to mind! (07) | I took a while re-reading C, D & A because they say the opposite to B. C-D invite me to look at my heart, not my life. Jesus invites me to note how my words reflect my heart. B fits Jesus' view best (and makes most sense to me) (14) | The parallelism in the simile is stark (03) | Good in practical application though not fully faithful to the meaning (02) |
| as per no 2 (09) | It makes me think about its truth and reflect on my life. (17) | Easy to understand but also poetic to read (05) | Relevant and straightforward (04) |
| has an ambiguity that keeps you mulling over what it means (31) | It's blunt and confrontational – which can be a good thing. (19) | clear (08) | It made me think about its application in my life. (11) |
| annoyed by it! (34) | Immediate, direct, evocative punch (26) | Most understandable (12) | Different to what I remember from Proverbs (18) |
| It writes out introspective ness for you to compare yourself with (84) | Second sentence makes me think about my life (28) | It explained the principals and teaching more clearly (15) | The use of repetition at the beginning of each line helps to emphasise and clarify the words that follow. (30) |
| how it's written (89) | life is what others see (33) | As above (22) | it flowed and seemed natural (52) |
| | I can comprehend it and apply it easily (41) | Because _it best expresses the thought in English (23) | easy (63) |
| | Referencing 'life' with 'heart' (55) | Because it's one of my favourite verses (32) | because of the challenge (64) |
| | Talking about one's life leads you to think of your own personal habits and how other people see you, and | Poetic, easily understood (45) | The use of "you" switches the focus to me, rather than making it a general statement about people. (68) |

| Proverbs 27:19 | | | |
|--|---|--|---|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| | whether that's helpful. (62) | | |
| | Notion of actions reflecting deeds (67) | It's axiomatic! (47) | The command "Look..." has impact on me. (75) |
| | The phrase "so one's life reflects the heart" makes the most sense, and is more a direct challenge to apply this passage to my life than the other versions. (71) | I read it, and I immediately understood what I was reading. Both lines have their message plain and clear. (56) | Because it sounds more poetic (86) |
| | As above (73) | Language used explains in easy to understand terms the principle God is communicating in this passage (60) | Had to stop & ponder whether it is true or not (88) |
| | It prompted me to sober self-examination. What I want or intend to do is all very well, but its what I actually do that will show what's inside.... and ultimately points to my need for Christ. (82) | The application jumps out of you in the words "real person" (65) | It's more personal (94) |
| | | Seems to decode the writer's message most clearly (69) | AS ABOVE (96) |
| | | 'THE REAL PERSON' HAS MORE OF AN IMPACT THAN MY 'NATURE' WHICH IS SOMEWHAT REMOVED FROM 'MY REALITY' IF THAT MAKES SENSE. (76) | |
| | | It is Clear (85) | |
| 5. Which version was the easiest to understand? | | | |
| plain, direct, clear (88) | Perhaps it explains the meaning of the passage more (03) | Simplest statement (07) | Plain language (04) |
| | It's easier to look at life than a heart (18) | very simple language, but almost too simple to be enjoyable (09) | Simple language and flow (05) |
| | It's stated the most bluntly – no imagery to hide the message. (19) | <i>Real person</i> is pretty modern concept. (17) | mirror image is easier to identify with than water (28) |
| | Direct, simple, unambiguous, | As above (22) | The use of "mirror" as a simlily for water and a |

| Proverbs 27:19 | | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|---|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| | uncluttered (26) | | meaning of reflection of our physical body makes the first line clear. Using the word “Look to..” is a call to action to consider your heart as the place where your nature resides. (30) |
| | It makes sense (42) | It’s similar to the version that I know, I think (32) | simple pattern (31) |
| | It was probably the closest to the spoken English that I am used to. (57) | Clear simple message (47) | nice comparison (63) |
| | Clearest about what we should be looking at and what that means (67) | More contemporary language (50) | More common metaphors (68) |
| | | As in Points 2 & 4 above. Point 2) It's plain and simple English, and it says all that needs to be said. I don't need to stop and ask myself "what is this trying to say to me?" Point 4) I read it, and I immediately understood what I was reading. Both lines have their message plain and clear. (56) | The analogy of a mirror replacing water seems more appropriate for today. Its direct and to the point. (82) |
| | | Language used explains in easy to understand terms the principle God is communicating in this passage (60) | Looks like two separate statements (85) |
| | | It was concise (62) | SEE Q2 (90) |
| | | it is clearest as it is more a statement than a challenge (64) | |
| | | Because it leaves very little to the imagination. The words are everyday words and this interprets it for the reader. (65) | |
| | | See answer to `4` (69) | |
| | | Simple structure and | |

| Proverbs 27:19 | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| | | wording. (70) | |
| | | Simplest. but also most simplistic. (73) | |
| | | I would speak like that (84) | |
| | | simple english (89) | |
| | | | |
| 6. Which version was the most beautiful or poetic? | | | |
| Has more of an element of a riddle that invites the person to try to solve it. (03) | Brevity gives emotive depth (26) | Meter (05) | Each line starts with the same 2 words “Look to.....”. It is poetic and directional at the same time. (30) |
| When spoken it sounds best (04) | Structure meaning and balance (42) | A nice balance of images (22) | More poetic (32) |
| Because it is! (07) | For the above reasons. Retains the as, so. Uses poetic language. D has parallelism, but seems to be executed in a clumsy way. (65) | It flows. (47) | It has a nice rhythm (62) |
| as per no 2 (09) | None were particularly beautiful (67) | Maybe some folk could see "poetry" in the other 3 Versions above, but I don't (56) | Just sounds poetic (85) |
| It uses imagery and the two lines are parallel in form. (11) | Closest parallel structure. (68) | | |
| Sounds weird, so it must be poetic (12) | It flows (81) | | |
| The parallel structure in the first and second line, rhythm (17) | GOOD RHYTHM. “WATER” IS MORE POETIC THAN “MIRROR” (90) | | |
| Poetic repetition. (19) | | | |
| the first line isn't the way you would normally speak (28) | | | |
| deeper – forces you to mull over it (31) | | | |
| rhythm (50) | | | |
| it has a more poetic style (64) | | | |
| See answer to `1` (69) | | | |
| Flows, easy to remember, rhythm is better. (70) | | | |
| Repeated words (face, man) create a sense of poetry. (71) | | | |

| Proverbs 27:19 | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| Pattern/repetition of final words- heart reflects heart, face reflects face. Still has that water imagery which I enjoyed. (73) | | | |
| I could see the picture of my face being reflected in the water. The figurative application of the man being reflected by his heart was not lost on me. (82) | | | |
| It makes you examine yourself without you knowing it (84) | | | |
| | | | |
| 7. If you gave a copy of this passage to a friend, which version would you choose? | | | |
| Because I like it most (07) | I think it explains the meaning of the proverb. (03) | Easy to understand (02) | Tells it as it is (04) |
| As per no 2 (09) | I would want to give my friend the version I felt was most faithful to the original author's intent. (11) | Both easy to understand and nice to read (05) | I would want my friend to read a version that was clear in meaning. (30) |
| I have more male friends and generally witness to males (24) | It's stated the most bluntly – no imagery to hide the message. (19) | Most understandable (12) | simple pattern, clearly understood (31) |
| For all the above reasons (50) | I actually like the poetry of it (21) | Easy to explain to someone (17) | Clearest meaning (35) |
| I would expect the friend to share my appreciation of it. (69) | Presents a stark contrast, with no ambiguity or distraction of ornate language (26) | All of the above (22) | Most people would look in a mirror at least once a day, and would see their reflection – and that version would remind them to look beyond the outward appearance on the mirror. (46) |
| It's simple and beautiful (77) | I'm going to use the version that had the most impact on me (28) | It refers to 'person' rather than 'man' and best communicates the concept in English (23) | because of the challenge (64) |
| Seems more thoughtful (84) | Well written. (36) | Because it works for me! (32) | sounds most modern (72) |
| Easy and straight forward (85) | Clear and consistent (42) | It's inclusive ...simple and clear. (47) | WE SELDOM USE WATER TO VIEW OUR REFLECTION NOWADAYS, MIRRORS |

| Proverbs 27:19 | | | |
|-----------------------|--|---|--|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| | | | AND IPHONES ARE USED, AND VERSION D STILL MAINTAINS THE ESSENCE OF THE INTENT THINK (76) |
| | I thought it was the simplest to understand, but still captured the tone of the passage. (57) | The purpose would be for them to read, stay interested, and take it to their heart. Then do something positive about what they have read. (56) | CONTEMPORARY, ATTENTION GRABBING RHYTHM (90) |
| | I think it is memorable and still hard hitting and thought provoking. (65) | Most straightforward (60) | |
| | Least easily misunderstood (67) | It is simple and to the point (62) | |
| | The direct challenge of saying a person's life reflects their heart is the most powerful to me. (71) | These were trickier because they are saying different things to me. Is the heart being reflected in the life or the nature being reflected in the heart (mind)? Being unsure what is being attempted to to convey makes it more difficult to say which one I would give to another person. (70) | |
| | Best and most enjoyable for me. (73) | Easy to understand. (81) | |
| | It gently prompts thoughtful reflection and is therefore most beneficial. (82) | easy to read (89) | |

Job 36:5-7

| Job 36:5-7 | | | |
|--|--|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| 2. Which version did you like the most? | | | |
| I found it the easiest to understand. Commencing with the word "Behold..." gives | It's modern language and its poetic effect. (03) | Good clear presentation (02) | Seems most apt for the subject. (13) |

| Job 36:5-7 | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| weight to the rest of the verse. The use of the word “righteous...” in the third last line clearly defines His people. (30) | | | |
| It seems the most poetic and authentic (50) | I like the wording better (21) | Reads most easily (04) | Doesn’t contain despise (25) |
| I liked the way it started with “behold”. It made a ‘grander’ start, which set the tone for the passage I think. (57) | It is the most easy to understand (51) | Gets the message across in the best words (07) | uses softer language (66) |
| It sounds the most familiar to the type of bible I read (84) | Language is clear and I can understand the point I believe the author is making (60) | the language is clear and understandable. (08) | READABILITY AND ENDS WITH AN IMPLIED TONE WHICH GLORIFIES GOD WHICH THE OTHERS ARE MORE STATEMETN OF FACT (76) |
| This version sounds more dramatic and “biblical” (86) | Unsure why (73) | Poetic yet easy to understand (09) | It felt the most genuine (87) |
| | Concise, easy for me to understand. (81) | It seems to be easiest to understand. (11) | SHORTER BUT TO THE POINT. <u>BUT</u> IT’S MIXED WITH AUST COLOQUEL, <u>WHICH IS WRONG</u> . (96) |
| | It focuses on The Lord’s Mightiness AND Firmness of Purpose. Its important to see this kind of inflexible Trustworthiness in God. (82) | I like the word “justice” (12) | |
| | Easy to read & understand. Straighforward (88) | feel it better portrays God’s power and sovereignty (16) | |
| | DIRECT, CLEAR (90) | The meaning is clear and the language relatively modern (17) | |
| | | Line 4 is better expressed – “rights” is a dangerous concept to introduce into Scripture. (19) | |
| | | It conveys the message in the simplest and most straightforward terms. (Although I would omit the | |

| Job 36:5-7 | | | |
|------------|---------|--|------------|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| | | "!" after the first sentence). (22) | |
| | | It flows well but expresses the concepts well at the same time (23) | |
| | | Clear and direct, without some of the jargon (both forensic and populist) of the others (26) | |
| | | easiest for me to understand (28) | |
| | | readable, lively, but not 'trying too hard' (31) | |
| | | It was the most comprehensible for me (32) | |
| | | easiest to understand (34) | |
| | | Flows easily as you read it. (35) | |
| | | It is written in straight forward modern language with people can understand. (36) | |
| | | Clear in understanding (42) | |
| | | Clearer Language (43) | |
| | | Understandability (45) | |
| | | It conveys a clear message (47) | |
| | | It flowed nicely. I liked the word "innocent" rather than "righteous" because it sounded child-like and comforting (62) | |
| | | easier to understand (63) | |
| | | I think it is clearer in its flow of thought (64) | |
| | | It retains the readability of the text and seems familiar to me. But it makes the point of the text clearer than the other translations by using structure and placement of the contrasting thoughts. (65) | |
| | | Maintains a pleasant cadence whilst conveying its message clearly. (69) | |
| | | Clear, flows, easier to | |

| Job 36:5-7 | | | |
|---|---|--|---|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| | | remember (70) | |
| | | Again, this version is the closest to my every day usage of the English language, while still maintaining the majesty of the passage. (71) | |
| | | I understood it easier (74) | |
| | | | |
| 3. Which version did you like the least? | | | |
| I hesitated between A and D, but as poetry D is much better, although, as poetry, not easy to understand for someone not used to reading poetry and working out what it means. A is a bit oldfashioned (e.g. behold) (08) | Had to think hard to understand it (09) | It seems to interpret meaning into the passage. (11) | Takes liberties with the meaning (02) |
| Using “right” instead of “rights” or “justice” sounds too Republican to me. I know it isn’t but when I hear “right” I just think political right. (12) | too plain (31) | | The use of the exclamation marks rather than effective language to show God’s character. (03) |
| giving their afflicted their right- I wasn’t clear what that meant (18) | | | Too colloquial (04) |
| Old fashioned language and awkward syntax (22) | | | Hardest to understand (05) |
| withdraw his eyes (25) | | | Too colloquial – something as important as the Bible needs more respect (07) |
| hardest to understand (34) | | | picture it forms in my mind is weaker and “fair go to the battler” sounds a bit corny like we expect to hear from Bill Shorten (16) |
| Less understandable (45) | | | I am not sure battlers is a good term for righteous or innocent |

| Job 36:5-7 | | | |
|--|---------|---------|--|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| | | | (17) |
| LONG WORDS, RHYTHM NOT GOOD (90) | | | Too colloquial. I’m not sure that non-Australians would fully appreciate the meaning. (19) |
| TOO WORDSY (96) | | | It is too casual in the wording (a bit Aussie) (21) |
| | | | The thoughts appear somewhat disjointed (23) |
| | | | Too folksy for this old man! (26) |
| | | | harder to understand, doesn’t use God’s name as often (28) |
| | | | ‘FAIR TO TO THE BATTLER’ SOUNDS VERY AUSTRALIAN! (29) |
| | | | The opening line could be mistaken as a question for a person new to reading scripture. A “fair go to the battler...” is more of a political slogan than scripture. “Good person...” lacks clarity of what defines a good person. (30) |
| | | | It was more like Yoda English (32) |
| | | | “Fair go to the battler” doesn’t gel with me. (35) |
| | | | battler (40) |
| | | | Uses poorly defined / understood slang (42) |
| | | | The “tempo” was a little jumpy (46) |
| | | | Sounds Ocker and jerky (47) |
| | | | I didn’t dislike it so much. It just seemed a bit Aussie (50) |
| | | | awkward choice of wording, in my opinion (52) |
| | | | Seemed a bit disjointed (57) |

| Job 36:5-7 | | | |
|------------|---------|---------|---|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| | | | "giving a fair go to the battler " sounds a bit bogan to me (60) |
| | | | I didn't like the phrase "fair go", it sounds awfully slang for the Bible. Also I didn't like the use of the dashes at the end of the passage (62) |
| | | | a bit bland, prosaic (63) |
| | | | Some of terms such as "good person" to me do not reflect accurately "the righteous" putting a twist in the understanding (64) |
| | | | It was too colloquial. Battler has many connotations that differ from one person to another, and it is not a term in general use anymore. It also does not make the contrasts as pointed. (65) |
| | | | trying to be colloquial - just weird (67) |
| | | | Phraseology is awkward; and word choices seem narrow culturally, particularly with reference to the 'battler'. (69) |
| | | | Sounds clunky and culturally bound. Aussie. Casual. Sentence structure difficult to read. More difficult to remember. (70) |
| | | | The phrase "but giving a fair go to the battler." feels a too casual for a translation of scripture. I value readability, but still think it is important that an element of formality is important. (71) |

| Job 36:5-7 | | | |
|------------|---------|---------|---|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| | | | For something as lofty as this (divine you might say!), the register seemed off to me. Words like “battler” make me think of the good ol’ Aussie battler and his fair go, and that, for me, conflicted with the high tone for how the speaker otherwise refers to his god. (73) |
| | | | “Giving a fair go to the battler” is a bit too much slang for my liking. (75) |
| | | | Uses language that is culturally out of place (77) |
| | | | Unusual choice of language e.g. line 5 – too casual for me. (81) |
| | | | The language was wishy washy. Some words had ambiguous meanings so could be misconstrued by worldly thinkers. Take, for example “good person”. In today’s thinking, everyone thinks they’re a good person, yet who among them are “righteous”? – God has written “there is no one good”! Also, What does “mighty in strength of heart” mean? Strongheartedness can still be thwarted by greater powers overriding good intentions. There’s a vast difference between “a fair go” and “justice”. What is the battler battling? Are they in need of justice and deliverance from a strong and cruel oppressor, or do they |

| Job 36:5-7 | | | |
|---|---|--|--|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| | | | just need more energy, strength and resources? Grrrr (82) |
| | | | I do not know what it means “giving a fair to go to battler” (84) |
| | | | “giving a fair go to the battler” is too colloquial – not a sentence befitting of the bible (86) |
| | | | too colloquial – cultural idiom “battler” (88) |
| | | | written for one culture (89) |
| | | | |
| 4. Which version had the most impact on you? | | | |
| “Behold” and “exalted” are evocative words (07) | Its modern language and its poetic effect. (03) | It is clear and easy to understand. (17) | as a teacher of English, I love poetry; it challenges you to think and work out the meaning of the words and their associations. But it would be too difficult for a non-believer, I think, or someone who does not like or understand poetry (08) |
| For the same reasons as in question 2. (30) | Resonates as “Bible language” (04) | It best expresses the contrasts: mighty but compassionate; retributive but just; watchful but generous. (19) | ‘Battler’ caught my eye (14) |
| Because of the poetry (50) | Easy to understand yet enjoyable (09) | the wording is very direct and explanatory (21) | I kept thinking about what it meant for God to give someone a ‘fair go’ (18) |
| Because it sounds more dramatic and “biblical” (86) | Made me think more about what it was saying (42) | As above (22) | some contemporary phrases that catch up you by surprise (eg fair go, battler) (31) |
| | clearest, easiest to read/understand (67) | Immediacy of main thematic statement and clear balance in structure (26) | Colloquial language (45) |
| | I’m not sure. Perhaps it sounds more familiar. (70) | The sentence “ He never takes his eyes off the innocent” is such a strong statement and the word | FELT LIKE AN AUSSIE LANGUAGE ‘FAIR GO’ (76) |

| Job 36:5-7 | | | |
|--|---|--|---|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| | | "never" encourages me (28) | |
| | I find this version the most poetic, and the best at conveying the grandeur of God, although some readability is sacrificed. (71) | Clear & coherent (32) | |
| | powerfully written (89) | easiest to understand (34) | |
| | CLARITY (90) | Clear to understand (35) | |
| | | For the first line alone!! (60) | |
| | | The phrase 'does not despise anyone' gives hope to someone who would be in the need of encouragement (62) | |
| | | again simplicity in the way it reads (64) | |
| | | Because of the clearness of putting the contrast between the two types of people before the reader it is easier to see the point of the text. (65) | |
| | | Opening two lines seem to encapsulate characteristics of deity more adequately. (69) | |
| | | I haven't read this passage before, so at this first experience I was a bit shocked that the god is not letting the wicked live! A bit threatening! (73) | |
| | | It was in the fresh language of today. Hit me anew in my heart. (82) | |
| | | | |
| 5. Which version was the easiest to understand? | | | |
| Analysing line by line, version A has clarity in more lines than any of the other versions. Each of the other three versions has at least one word or line that needs further clarifying. (30) | Its poetic suitability to show the majesty of God and the contemporary language. (03) | Sentence structure (04) | colloquial language; however does not sound formal enough for a bible. (09) |

| Job 36:5-7 | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| | it is succinct (28) | see 2 above (07) | It's colloquial so appeals to popular taste. However, other dialect groups might not agree. (19) |
| | Language is clear and I can understand the point I believe the author is making (60) | Straightforward language and simple syntax. Use of "innocent" rather than "righteous" (22) | ironically, it is very plain speaking despite the "Aussie" (21) |
| | | Clear language; logical development of sub-points (26) | Simple language (45) |
| | | As stated above (32) | Because it is Aussie (50) |
| | | Clear language (43) | Seemed colloquial (73) |
| | | The words flowed and it was not over worded (62) | APPEARS TO BE AUSTRALIAN? "FAIR GO" AND "BATTLER" REFLECTS AUSTRALIAN VALUES (90) |
| | | as above (64) | |
| | | For all the above reasons (65) | |
| | | The flow of thought seems to be unimpeded by jerky sentence construction. (69) | |
| | | It sounds accessible to a modern reader. Sentence structure and word choice make it easy to understand and there is no question who is being spoken of in each verse. (70) | |
| | | Simple language (77) | |
| | | They were straightforward statements in plain language. I don't have a problem with the substitution of the word "innocent" for "righteous" because I understand what Christ's blood has achieved. (82) | |
| | | | |
| 6. Which version was the most beautiful or poetic? | | | |
| see 4 above (07) | Effective parallelism and simplicity of vocabulary and syntax. (03) | See answer 4. (19) | I guess it is closest to the original and as mentioned above, it activates the reader (08) |

| Job 36:5-7 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| Slightly more dramatic tone (of vocabulary and structure) (26) | Just sounds right (04) | As above (22) | A fair go to the battler” just sounds like a cool phrase (12) |
| I struggle with this question about this passage. I do not find beauty or poetry in any version. I choose A because it up lifts me with the opening word “Behold” and I can read the passage with clarity. (30) | Old style language (09) | Consistent language and structure (42) | Poetic sentence construction uses repetition and has a good rhythm (17) |
| More poetic (32) | It seems to have a regular, planned rhythm. (11) | See answers to `2` and `5` above. (69) | the way it begins (28) |
| It has a simple style of language and still uses the symmetry to good effect. (65) | the slightly more ‘clipped’ statements gives it a more poetic tone (64) | | Rhetorical questions, poetic devices (45) |
| I liked the lofty language. Any stanza that starts with “behold” is likely to be a stonker! (73) | no annoying grammar (67) | | There wasn’t really a super poetic version of this verse, but I chose D because of the use of exclamation marks at the end - it showed triumph and joy, and that emotion is beautiful in itself. (62) |
| “Behold!” the invitation to look intently at God’s character! Wow! (82) | Has the best rhythm, I think, for memory. (70) | | |
| | Flows best, powerful when read. (81) | | |
| | | | |
| 7. If you gave a copy of this passage to a friend, which version would you choose? | | | |
| I would want my friend to have the clearest version of the scripture and one that announces God’s word at the beginning of the passage. (30) | Simplicity and poetic effect. (03) | Communicates what God is about (04) | I live in Australia (89) |
| Probably the most enjoyable from a literary perspective. (73) | straightforward (28) | see 2 above (07) | |
| | Gets the point across (60) | good mix of easy to understand as well as | |

| Job 36:5-7 | | | |
|-------------------|---|--|------------|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| | | poetic (09) | |
| | clearest (67) | “justice” (12) | |
| | There can be no confusion as to who God is, or what He will do for the people who have put their trust in Him. (82) | (despite the temptation to go for less active A or B “does not keep wicked alive” (16) | |
| | | Pretty straightforward (17) | |
| | | It talks about justice rather than rights. (19) | |
| | | As above (22) | |
| | | Unambiguous clarity of strong point (26) | |
| | | balance of readability and interest yet not trying too hard to be contemporary (31) | |
| | | Easiest to understand (32) | |
| | | Communicates the best (42) | |
| | | Good mix of poetic and understanding (45) | |
| | | It is easy to understand and “flows” well. (46) | |
| | | Easiest to understand (62) | |
| | | In general C – to an Aussie! D (64) | |
| | | Because I think that it is important that they see the point of the text and this translation does that the best. (65) | |
| | | Meaning is clear; style is pleasing; probability of friend reading it and understanding it would be maximised. (69) | |
| | | Easy to understand, especially if someone’s English skills were average. (70) | |
| | | While I find A more “poetic” I find C much easier to understand while still reading well. (93) | |

Ecclesiastes 10:1-3

| Ecclesiastes 10:1-3 | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| 2. Which version did you like the most? | | | |
| Easy to understand with an enigmatic element that might cause a reader to think more. (03) | Comparison between Right & Left is spot on. (04) | Clear presentation (02) | I prefer “right and wrong” to “right and left”. Being left-handed, I get a bit tired of left being gauche, and suggestions that it’s the opposite of right. (07) |
| SUCCINT (29) | It was easy to read and made sense immediately. (11) | it paraphrases here and there but in this case, I think that is very helpful (A wise person chooses the right road / a fool takes the wrong one), since to the right and to the left may not be clear to the average reader and some might even interpret ‘right’ as politically conservative and ‘left’ as ‘leftwing’ (08) | It’s the most eloquently expressed. (19) |
| Balance of poetic and understanding (45) | The imagery is vivid and relevant to modern society (17) | It was easy to understand and pretty funny (09) | It's more explanatory (21) |
| It was understandable, but still reverent sounding. (57) | The opening simile is very clear and provides a meaningful base for what follows. (26) | I like the last phrase. (12) | This version is very poetic and uses a minimum of words to make the statements. This combination of poetry and word efficiency has a maturity of translation. (30) |
| It is the plainest and easiest to understand without jargon or very casual language. (70) | I understand it the easiest (28) | It is clearest (14) | It seems the most authentic (50) |
| It was the best of an awkward bunch, in terms of ease of reading. (73) | smooth (31) | The others, by using "right" and "left", could be misconstrued in this day and age to have political implications (22) | Brings out the heart of the matter in every line. (82) |
| TOUGH ONE BETWEEN C AND A, THEY WERE BOTH A PREFERENCE, BUT THE USE OF THE WORD ‘STINK’ FELT TOO | Easiest to understand (34) | Simpler to understand the meaning in English (23) | DIRECT USE OF QUOTATION LIVENS IT UP. PLEASING RHYTHM (90) |

| Ecclesiastes 10:1-3 | | | |
|--|--|---|------------|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| SLANG-LIKE, STENCH FELT MORE RESPECTFUL IN THE WORD OF GOD (76) | | | |
| | Clearer language, Explains the point better (43) | Easiest to understand (27) | |
| | "bad smell" reads better than "stench" or "stink". However, I preferred the ending of passage A the best, because "fool" reads better than "stupid". (62) | Simple & easy to understand (32) | |
| | It has the neatest arrangement about it. It retains the simple as, so without using too much verbage. (I am a conservative, so I like right and left. Not sure what the original language meant though!) (65) | IT expresses the message well. (36) | |
| | Best combination of simple language and conveying meaning (77) | Foolishness makes more sense to me than folly (41) | |
| | Makes the most sense to me and easy to read. (81) | Makes more sense (42) | |
| | THE BEST OF A BAD LOT (96) | It makes the truth clear (47) | |
| | | It makes sense. (53) | |
| | | Language is clear and I can understand the point I believe the author is making (60) | |
| | | easy reading (63) | |
| | | Either between B or C but I think C is clearer. The use of folly in B means you would need to be more aware of "olde world English" (if there is such a term! (64) | |
| | | Meaning not tainted by the possible inference of political `right` and | |

| Ecclesiastes 10:1-3 | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| | | political 'left'. (69) | |
| | | Readable and clear. The use of "right and wrong" compared to "left and right" in version A/B is helpful. (71) | |
| | | well written – can understand (89) | |
| | | | |
| 3. Which version did you like the least? | | | |
| "Perfumer's ointment" doesn't sit comfortably with me (07) | I disliked the term "left" instead of wrong. I chose this over A because I also dislike the word "stupid"(09) | The slang terms and general air of the whole are off-putting, to the point of being very close to erroneous in implication. (26) | Awkward phrase structure (02) |
| not logical (42) | I don't like the "left" and "right" as it seems political and I find using the word "stupid" to be disrespectful. (12) | DON'T LIKE EXCLAMATION MARK (29) | No verb in the second sentence, the style of the last sentence doesn't flow easily. (03) |
| I have to try and work out what parts of it mean. It encourages me to only be literal, yet not all fools walk on the road telling everyone that they are fools. (82) | It's a little TOO derogatory. (19) | When I read this version, I feel it is lacking in the expression of wisdom. It appears to me to be written in an immature way. (30) | Feels clumsy (04) |
| The language in this one is too colloquial and informal (86) | It was more difficult to understand the proverb (21) | It seems a bit obvious (50) | though poetical, too difficult (08) |
| | hearts inclining to the right implies physical inclination (25) | | It was difficult to read and understand. (11) |
| | political conotation. same with a (63) | | just sounds clunky (18) |
| | Casual last line. I think the word Stupid doesn't convey the same meaning as foolishness. (70) | | I can't understand what it's saying. It doesn't make sense to me. (20) |
| | A bit rougher than the others in terms of word choice. Still.. impactful I suppose. (73) | | Awkward syntax (22) |
| | A BIT CLUMSY (90) | | Appears disjointed in its message (23) |
| | | | hardest to understand (27) |

| Ecclesiastes 10:1-3 | | | |
|----------------------------|---------|---------|---|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| | | | More poetic (28) |
| | | | 'perfumer's perfume putrefies' feels awkward! (31) |
| | | | Awkward & clumsy (32) |
| | | | old word order (33) |
| | | | Too complex in structure, second line had to read twice to understand. (35) |
| | | | Formal language (45) |
| | | | It is gobbledygook (47) |
| | | | difficult to understand (51) |
| | | | I was quite confused with the meaning. I didn't understand the passage until I read the other versions. (57) |
| | | | Language feels convoluted and cumbersome (60) |
| | | | The alliteration at the beginning and the sentence structure makes it clunky and hard to follow (62) |
| | | | It reads clumsily (64) |
| | | | This version was quite clumsy, especially the first line. I think many readers or listeners would get lost before the point was made, especially as this introduces the whole point of the stanza. (65) |
| | | | Back to front sentence construction does not appeal to me from a readability point of view. (69) |
| | | | While I can read this, it requires more attention. I think this relates to sentence structure/word ordering. D isn't written in a clear or concise way. I found it easy to |

| Ecclesiastes 10:1-3 | | | |
|---|--|---|---|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| | | | skim over sections, and had to force myself to read it. (71) |
| | | | IT READ LIKE GOOGLE TRANSLATE DID THIS ONE, AND IT WAS HAVING A BAD DAY AT THAT (76) |
| | | | Too complex in the first line (77) |
| | | | Weird language in this one. (81) |
| | | | No-one uses the word “putrifies” (87) |
| | | | written for the well educated (89) |
| | | | |
| 4. Which version had the most impact on you? | | | |
| Easy to understand with an enigmatic element that might cause a reader to think more. (03) | perhaps not as clear as C but a bit closer to the original, I think (08) | Easy to understand (09) | Lines 5-7 have the most resonance (07) |
| The last line (04) | It's expressed in a confrontational manner. The impact was the offence. (19) | Simply stated. However, I do not like the last two lines, and would replace them with the final three lines of version B (22) | The language is more impactful e.g. <i>putrifies</i> and <i>senseless</i> are stronger words and more forceful on the reader (17) |
| It seemed to use stronger language. (11) | It simply made immediate sense (26) | Its flow thus easier to grasp (23) | This version is very poetic, it makes me take notice and I want to read more. (30) |
| I read it first. (12) | The word stupid (40) | I like the word identify, I like that the first part the verbs are active (28) | Because I read it first (42) |
| It was an interesting version (32) | Again it impacted me only slightly more than C (64) | clear, balanced, with some punch (31) | The rather dramatic self-announcement, “I am a fool”. (69) |
| I liked the wording the best (62) | As per answer 3 (73) | simple (33) | See Question 2 answer. (82) |
| It doesn't have 'As' as the first word and made me question what I have been reading for years (No I didn't peek) It seems to convey the meaning clearly and avoids some of the clunky or overly casual | | Plainly spoken (45) | |

| Ecclesiastes 10:1-3 | | | |
|--|---|--|---|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| expressions used in some of the other versions. (70) | | | |
| CLEARER (90) | | The way the last sentence is worded cracks me up! (60) | |
| | | Just because it is readable and talks about right and wrong, not right and left. In today's political climate, right and left are loaded terms! (65) | |
| | | right road – left road – not a political party as in right & left or any other interpretation of right or left (89) | |
| | | | |
| 5. Which version was the easiest to understand? | | | |
| Structure (04) | Simplest language. (13) | Just because (07) | but putrefies and minimised could be big words for some (16) |
| RIGHT/LEFT - RIGHT/WRONG – EASY (29) | More straightforward - however, it has the "left-right" problem. (22) | see question 2 (08) | There is no ambiguity in the words or how they are strung together (30) |
| Use of active voice for modern ears? (50) | Clarity, simple illustration, impossible to be misunderstood (26) | Colloquial language, the others were clunky (09) | |
| Once again, I preferred the wording in this one the best. (62) | Simplest language (87) | The vocabulary is accessible e.g. "stink", "the right road", "the wrong one". (19) | |
| The flow of thoughts seemed to be expressed most simply and elegantly (69) | | Actually it is a toss up between C and B. I like different aspects (28) | |
| Plain, clear language and structure. (70) | | As stated above (32) | |
| | | Just for replacing "folly" with "foolishness".. I think that makes it more understandable in these times. (54) | |
| | | Language is clear and I can understand the point I believe the author is making (60) | |

| Ecclesiastes 10:1-3 | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| | | It reads as more contemporary with a certain “contempt’ tone in the expression (64) | |
| | | Same reasons as above (65) | |
| | | simple language (78) | |
| | | It’s the plain speech of today. (82) | |
| | | PITY ABOUT 2nd LINE OF D. (90) | |
| | | | |
| 6. Which version was the most beautiful or poetic? | | | |
| The starkness of the contrasts between wisdom and folly, between the wise and the fool and the language is less colloquial. (03) | It flows more easily (22) | | Not too comfortable with the alliteration in Line 1, but other lines make up for it. (07) |
| Also structure, readability (04) | rhythm seems more balanced than other versions setting up the contrasting punch of the last line (31) | | “putrifies”; also the last 2 lines were the best out of the 4. (09) |
| As stated above (32) | Balance in the wording and structure (64) | | It seems to have a purposely controlled rhythm. (11) |
| Even though it does not use “as” it retains the as, so relationship and the rest of the stanza is just more poetic than the other versions. Better choice of words that fit a poetic style. (65) | Hard one to choose – this is not a beautiful passage! (81) | | How can’t you find the alliteration of “perfumer’s perfume putrifies” beautiful, even if what it is describing isn’t. That’s poetry! (12) |
| | | | As for 5- imagery mostly (17) |
| | | | It has beautiful cadence in expressing the similes and contrasts. (19) |
| | | | More imaginative structure and phraseology (26) |
| | | | The first line is not normal speech (28) |
| | | | It appears this version is very intentionally poetic in its translation (30) |
| | | | Balance and structure |

| Ecclesiastes 10:1-3 | | | |
|---|--|---|---|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| | | | (42) |
| | | | Seems to have its own rhythm as I read it (60) |
| | | | The alliteration at the beginning, and the repetitive use of the word “heart” (62) |
| | | | alliteration (63) |
| | | | Because of the rather odd (poetic???) phraseology. (69) |
| | | | Apart from P, P, P in the first line. (70) |
| | | | The word selection in version D is probably the most poetic, but this makes the passage harder to read. (71) |
| | | | Although the meaning was a bit impenetrable at first read, that didn’t deduct from a more balanced metre than the others, and the first line alliteration was quite fun. (73) |
| | | | Loved the alliteration in the first line. I also think it paints the most accurate picture of a fool. (82) |
| | | | Even though the first sentence is pretty clumsy, it avoids the words “stink”, “Stench” and “stupid”, which make this one the most poetic of a rather unpoetic bunch. (86) |
| 7. If you gave a copy of this passage to a friend, which version would you choose? | | | |
| Sufficient clarity of the language and the effectiveness of the poetry. | It is the easiest to understand (17) | C for simpler readers, D for my other friends (07) | I like its cadences. (19) |
| Unambiguous (04) | Most clear and sensible in what it communicates (26) | It’s funny with a deeper meaning. I like it a lot. (09) | The ancient poetry is beautiful and easy to understand (24) |
| It’s a hard decision between A and B, | Although I thought C was a little easier to | It’s my favorite. (12) | I would like my friend to have a version that is |

| Ecclesiastes 10:1-3 | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| because I like those two the most, but I chose A because the formatting feels the most familiar (62) | understand, I would probably choose B to send to a friend because it sounds a little more serious (in tone). (57) | | clear and makes them want to read more. (30) |
| Easy to understand. + (70) | Because it gives the best presentation of the main point. (65) | As above - amended to replace the last two lines with the last three of B (22) | Most interesting, if not the most easy to understand (73) |
| | clearest (67) | Ease of understanding so they are likely to have the most positive response. (23) | It has a lovely balance of word-pictures with clarity of meaning, and doesn't encourage judgemental self-righteousness. (82) |
| | I especially like the wording in the middle section (77) | C or B because I understand them more easily (28) | |
| | good all rounder (89) | blunt and impactful (31) | |
| | | For it's simplicity (32) | |
| | | Clearly written (36) | |
| | | Because it is the easiest to understand (42) | |
| | | Most impact, blunt (45) | |
| | | I think people can identify with the word "foolishness" (46) | |
| | | Gets to the point (60) | |
| | | it has more sass (64) | |
| | | Because a friend of mine would in all probability share my taste in such matters. (69) | |

Lamentations 3:52-54

| Lamentations 3:52-54 | | | |
|---|---|---|--------------------------------------|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| 2. Which version did you like the most? | | | |
| Plain logical development of the story (02) | Communicates the message effectively (04) | Contemporary vocabulary and expressions, poetic effectiveness. (03) | I could feel the emotions best. (12) |
| States the case clearly. "Lost" is a good word (07) | clear and esp They tried to end my life in a pit , though probably less | It was easy to read and clear. (11) | vivid imagery (17) |

| Lamentations 3:52-54 | | | |
|--|---|--|---|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| | close to the original (they threw me into a cistern/pit), makes the intentions of his enemies explicit (08) | | |
| Emotional content the strongest. (13) | Flowed nicely and easy to understand (09) | Provides the clearest meaning in simple, straightforward language (22) | I enjoyed the acrostic alphabet translation (18) |
| Very strong first line but at the same time direct in meaning (26) | It conveys great emotion in a dignified manner. (19) | Ease of reading and understanding (23) | the simplicity of the words amused me! (21) |
| SAD RESIGNATION AT THE END (29) | It sounds familiar to me and I understand it. The language doesn't sound just like a paraphrase. (28) | The words describe clearly what is happening. (30) | Dramatic flair (45) |
| Consistent language style- communicates well (42) | Simple structure, reads easily first pass (35) | Easiest to follow (32) | Best written- all begin with asome sibilant gerund, other alliterations in there, silence in a "rock-carved reservoir" sounds a lot more foreboding than a simple pit death. (73) |
| The forceful and descriptive language (50) | I like its clarity (64) | Clearly written (36) | beautifully written (89) |
| I think the emotion seemed a lot more real and personal, as the speaker was speaking in first person. (57) | It constitutes the easiest word picture for me to visualise. (69) | It was simple and concise (62) | |
| Ease of reading and clarity of language (60) | not final (78) | description (63) | |
| It flows nicely while making the point of the passage. (65) | Easiest for me to understand. (81) | I understood it immediately (74) | |
| Concise, flows, easy to remember (70) | | It shows the suffering soul's passionate agony - its questioning and despair. (82) | |
| Clear and easy to read. (71) | | BETTER USE OF WORDS (90) | |
| "Casting stones" is a classic biblical expression that sounds the most fitting. (86) | | | |
| I like the "I am lost" (93) | | | |

| Lamentations 3:52-54 | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| A BIT BETTER. REMINDS US OF THE SEMITIC LOVE OF STONING. (96) | | | |
| | | | |
| 3. Which version did you like the least? | | | |
| "I am lost" is a bit of a letdown compared to "this is the end" (09) | No particular reason, they were all pretty good, but the others edged out B. (12) | Too flat and literal. (13) | Too much added descriptive detail (02) |
| enemies without cause (25) | It seems quite prosaic (50) | The least dramatic (17) | The staccato character of the poetry, not as smooth. (03) |
| Formal language (45) | I had to think more, it was somewhat more complicated (74) | "My enemies whom I had never harmed", if not illogical, rang a bit childish. (73) | Does not indicate his demise is from an unknown source (04) |
| It is harder to juggle the imagery (64) | | TOO WORDY. (96) | least poetic (05) |
| didn't get how water closed over my head, and lost seemed not all that bad vs the 'end' (76) | | | Lines 1-2 don't scan well. "Sloshing" too colloquial (07) |
| lost? or drowning? (89) | | | beautiful poetry, but not very helpful for clear understanding (08) |
| | | | I don't think it uses proper sentences! (11) |
| | | | It's grammatically incorrect. It has misplaced modifiers which create ambiguity. The language is mundane. (19) |
| | | | Awkward syntax (22) |
| | | | Most formal (23) |
| | | | Too gimmicky by far; lacks precision of meaning in an apparent quest for populist favour (26) |
| | | | too poetic (28) |
| | | | Some words and lines are not clear and need some assumptions to be made about what they mean. (30) |
| | | | a nice English poem but it felt a bit distant from the 'original' (31) |
| | | | Too poetic (32) |
| | | | The S's starting each |

| Lamentations 3:52-54 | | | |
|----------------------|---------|---------|--|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| | | | phrase don't really make it easier (35) |
| | | | It does not include / have a subject. ie, it does not say who does the stalking etc (36) |
| | | | 'rock-carved reservoir?' 'try hard' 'Sloshing'?_passive informal (42) |
| | | | The word 'reservoir' might give a picture of a 'lake' rather than a 'well' which I think is intended. (44) |
| | | | didn't understand it (52) |
| | | | I thought it seemed like it was just choosing certain words for the sake of alliteration, rather than accurately portraying meaning being the primary goal. (57) |
| | | | Use of metaphor and language that grated on me rather than helping me empathise with the author (60) |
| | | | It sounds pretty just for reading, but it would be frustrating if I were to study it (62) |
| | | | It is just very clumsy and doesn't seem to flow. (65) |
| | | | trying to be poetic - just weird (67) |
| | | | Inelegant and jerky literary style (69) |
| | | | Contrived. The meaning gets lost in the poetry (70) |
| | | | Taken in isolation at least, it isn't really clear what the author is talking about in this passage, compared with the other versions. (71) |
| | | | The attempt at alliteration was offputting (77) |

| Lamentations 3:52-54 | | | |
|---|---|---|--|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| | | | An impersonal, clinical, detached, stilted statement of facts as if a robot had written it, not a wrongfully treated human being. The focus was on describing the surroundings, not on the injustice. Did the writer slosh water over his head as he cried “It’s the end of me?” T’would appear so. (82) |
| | | | “Sloshing water over my head” doesn’t really sound very dramatic (86) |
| | | | Doesn’t make sense (87) |
| 4. Which version had the most impact on you? | | | |
| Perhaps the older vocabulary is more familiar to me. (03) | Two of the other three were similar in impact: but ‘B’ gets my vote because it is easier for me to read. (69) | The last lament “This is the end!” (04) | Emotions (12) |
| Language (eg. flung) | | because of I cried out, this is the end. that is the most forceful translation (08) | The first sentence is an attention grabber more so than the others. (17) |
| Words like “hunted”, “flung”, “cast” and “lost” have elements of lament (07) | | Flowed well and the ending was dramatic (09) | had to work hard to understand it (27) |
| captures essence of lament (18) | | the words are very profound and tell it how it is (21) | when read in the light of the others, it gave a fresh look at the meaning (31) |
| It sounds desperate. (19) | | As above (22) | Dramatic (45) |
| Concise language, simplicity of structure, with deeply personal impact of desolation at both beginning and end (26) | | Ease of understanding (23) | It has a different tone to the phrasing (64) |
| ABOVE (29) | | the finality of the last sentence (28) | As per answer 2 (73) |
| More feeling in language (42) | | The clarity of the words makes the story real and the reader feels a sense of what it was like for the author. (30) | most descriptive to engage the reader in the calamity ‘caving in’ of all that was going on (76) |

| Lamentations 3:52-54 | | | |
|---|---|--|--|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| Language personalised gives understanding of the hardships the author was going through (60) | | as above (32) | descriptive (89) |
| It is not jarring in its style so the point seems to come through more readily. (65) | | The phrase “whom I had never harmed” struck resonance because it showed how innocent the protagonist is. (62) | |
| “I am lost” (67) | | because it was easy to understand, I liked the “this is the end” (74) | |
| ‘Flung me alive...’ strong and full of meaning. Clear. ‘I was hunted...’ Strong first person statement. Good rhythm. (70) | | The scene unfolds sentence by sentence, written as an action piece. It describes the heart of the unjustly treated sufferer in its agony – I can relate to this entirely. (82) | |
| This version sounds more dramatic and “biblical” (86) | | | |
| MOST DIRECT EXPRESSION (90) | | | |
| | | | |
| 5. Which version was the easiest to understand? | | | |
| Modern language – straightforward structure (17) | Best communication (04) | Contemporary vocabulary and expressions, poetic effectiveness. (03) | Didn’t know what it was about until I read the others (09) |
| The syntax is easy to follow. (19) | The meaning could be confusing - ‘lost’ versus ‘perish’. (44) | simplest words (07) | |
| Simple and evocative, without distracting jargon (26) | Because it is prosaic (50) | I missed the “without cause” in B and A and picked up on the “whom I never harmed” in C. (12) | |
| Language is clear and I can understand the point I believe the author is making (60) | It has simpler thought sequence (64) | As above (22) | |
| The style is metaphor and it holds that without labouring the point. We have lost hope because of what | see answer to question 2 (69) | Language seems more contemporary (28) | |

| Lamentations 3:52-54 | | | |
|---|---|---|--|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| has happened. (65) | | | |
| SEE 4. ABOVE (90) | It is a clear explanation of what is happening. If somebody had poor English skills was a ESL student they may have problems with “This is the end! Or ‘I am lost.’ but no problem with I thought I was about to perish. (70) | The story of what is happening to the author is clearest in this version. (30) | |
| | Clear concise statements of fact following on from each other. (82) | as above (32) | |
| | | Simple language and images (42) | |
| | | Simple language (45) | |
| | | I found it to be the most concise. I also liked the active speech at the end, it reinforces helplessness (62) | |
| | | Found it slightly simplistic (73) | |
| | | | |
| 6. Which version was the most beautiful or poetic? | | | |
| Effective parallelism with less explanation and perhaps a greater need to stop and try to understand what is being said. (03) | It’s language and vocabulary are dignified. (19) | IN ALL OF THEM THE LAST LINE IS CLUMSY. (90) | Leaves something to the imagination (04) |
| see 4 above (07) | It has a nice flow (22) | | I liked the alliteration (from the original?); though I found sloshing water over my head, I cry a bit confusing. Does it mean: ‘I had sloshing water over my head?’ (I guess so). But grammatically it could also mean ‘As I slosh water over my head, I cry’, but I am sure the victim did not do that. (08) |
| While direct, it incorporates powerful images of desolation in | It’s clarity has depth of feeling. (44) | | Similies, metaphors, all that stuff (09) |

| Lamentations 3:52-54 | | | |
|---|---|---------|---|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| its simplicity of sentence form. (26) | | | |
| sounds dramatic when told with 'I' language (31) | Whilst 'D' seems to be an attempt to be more poetic, it is so lacking in its word choices as to fall below 'B' for poetic quality. (69) | | It uses controlled vocabulary and form. (11) |
| Consistent language style (42) | | | Evokes the most emotion (12) |
| It reads like a script for a play. (46) | | | Alliteration (all the S words) onomatopoeia (<i>sloshing</i>) (17) |
| Choice of words and not trying to explain, rather letting the style and poetry make the point. (65) | | | starting the sentences with present participles isn't typical (28) |
| Good Rhythm and clear pictures. (70) | | | This was written as poetry, however, the subject matter of the verse, I don't believe, is well served through poetry. I do not find beauty in this poetry because of the subject matter. (30) |
| D is more poetic, but not more beautiful (77) | | | but I didn't like it so much! (32) |
| | | | Dramatic (45) |
| | | | Alliteration at the beginning of each line. The phrase "rock-carved reservoir" also sounds very pretty (62) |
| | | | rhythm (63) |
| | | | its clipped thought, alliteration and starting with active words such as sloshing, Stalking and silencing (64) |
| | | | As per answer 2. (73) |
| | | | Beginning each line with the same sound has a great effect; the language seems more poetic than literal. (75) |
| | | | Reads like a poem, very different in comparison to the other passages. (81) |

| Lamentations 3:52-54 | | | |
|---|--|--|---|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| | | | It was an attempt at poetry. I could see the picture painted, but I didn't get a sense of it happening in real life. There was no beauty or life in the lines. (82) |
| | | | WOULD'VE BEEN BETTER IF STONING WAS INCLUDED. (96) |
| | | | |
| 7. If you gave a copy of this passage to a friend, which version would you choose? | | | |
| It conveys the meaning in a straightforward way. (17) | Understandable (04) | Contemporary vocabulary and expressions, poetic effectiveness. (03) | Emotions (12) |
| The others seem to be trying too hard to communicate obliquely what A manages directly (26) | It conveys the truth of a desperate situation with dignity and honesty. (19) | Dramatic, easy to understand (09) | |
| Conveys meaning in words and feeling (42) | Straight forward to understand (35) | I'd want it to be clear and easy to read. (11) | |
| Clear communication (60) | It is very literal and easy to understand (46) | Best conveys the meaning (22) | |
| All the reasons above. (65) | it will always opt for the simplest to interpret (64) | It would depend on the cultural background of the friend, if they were from a hunter gather background I'd give them D (25) | |
| it's my fave (67) | I would want my friend to be able to read what I gave him with maximum benefit and enjoyment. (69) | It is the easiest to understand (28) | |
| Unless they were new to English. Then B. (70) | | I would want my friend to have a passage that is easy to understand and reflects the gravity of the circumstances the author is describing. (30) | |
| This version sounds more dramatic and "biblical" (86) | | Because it makes more sense (32) | |
| SEE 4. (90) | | Good balance (45) | |
| It is a middle ground between the "poetic" D and the easy to | | It made the most sense (62) | |

| Lamentations 3:52-54 | | | |
|----------------------|---------|---|------------|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| understand B. (93) | | | |
| | | easier (63) | |
| | | Easiest to understand (77) | |
| | | It has a beauty and fluidity about it – it will resonate wherever unjust treatment occurs and a soul is suffering. (82) | |

Song of Songs 7:6-9a

| Song of Songs 7:6-9a | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| 2. Which version did you like the most? | | | |
| Straightforward (04) | Simple and elegant (07) | I think ‘my loved one’ in A sounds impersonal, and ‘your stature’ (A and B sounds too formal for a lover. That leaves D and C. In D I liked especially ‘and fondle its fruit’ but I prefer <i>May your kisses be as exciting as the best wine— to the more literal and [may] the roof of your mouth taste like the best wine.</i> (08) | It’s the most titillating. (12) |
| Pleasant; didn’t like factors in the others eg quotations, the word “fondle” (09) | Elegance and dignity of imagery (26) | It conveys the message in a straightforward and unadorned manner (22) | Song of songs, or as I call it, “meta song”. If the intention’s for it to bawdy, this read like a shanty to me. (73) |
| It is concise and has rhythm (50) | Because I’m used to that version, perhaps? (32) | While poetic it conveys the message simply but graphically (23) | This one seems the most poetic to me. (86) |
| It is the simplest yet it does not preinterpret some of the meanings (64) | Poetic, good imagery, easy to understand (45) | action (63) | different from what I’ve read before & in keeping with the sexual nature of the book. (88) |
| It leaves enough to the imagination that it could still be read in mixed company, but it still expresses the delights of marriage and its | I liked the sentence structure the best, and it felt both tender and poetic, but not over the top (62) | descriptive (89) | MOST EROTIC (90) |

| Song of Songs 7:6-9a | | | |
|---|--|-----------------|--|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| consummation. (65) | | | |
| OR 'B' OR 'C' (96) | Liked the flow, was concise to read. (81) | | |
| | | | |
| 3. Which version did you like the least? | | | |
| the others are better (08) | I mean, seriously, who uses the word "stature" when trying to seduce a woman. (12) | Don't know (13) | Over sensationalised (02) |
| lack of quotation marks (31) | This version leaves very little to the imagination and verges on erotica. (65) | | A bit too explicit a holy book (04) |
| Probably the plainest version (32) | | | a bit explicit perhaps? (07) |
| cumbersome (63) | | | FONDLE (09) |
| Being "pleasant" isn't much of a compliment! (86) | | | It seems unnecessarily erotic (22) |
| how tall is she?? (89) | | | Most disjointed in its flow (23) |
| LESS EXPRESSIVE (90) | | | So folksy that it becomes profane (26) |
| | | | WHY ONLY THE ROOF OF THE MOUTH? (29) |
| | | | Crikey - Little too graphic (40) |
| | | | Too explicit (45) |
| | | | Sounds like it went through a porno translator (50) |
| | | | Way too much detail, but not in a delicate way (62) |
| | | | It preinterprets that the references in this passage should predominately be seen as sexual rather than more sensual or metaphoric. The mystery is important. (64) |
| | | | 'the roof of your mouth....' – doesn't do it for me.... (80) |
| | | | Too descriptive for me! (81) |
| | | | "roof of your mouth" is |

| Song of Songs 7:6-9a | | | |
|---|--|--|---|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| | | | odd (87) |
| | | | “fondle” is a bit of an icky word (93) |
| | | | IS HE GOING TO LICK THE ROOF OF HER MOUTH? (96) |
| | | | |
| 4. Which version had the most impact on you? | | | |
| its language allows your visualisation to be more metaphoric than sensual/sexual. To lock this passage only (or predominately as a sexual passage is to greatly under rate the metaphoric relationship it has with other scripture). It is almost an over exaggeration of one layer of reading to the detriment of the others. (64) | see 2 above (07) | Exciting with all the exclamation marks (09) | Somewhat titillating (04) |
| | The patently erotic content is managed with elegance and decorum, yet is still poignantly evocative (26) | | the poetry reflects the poet’s feelings: short exclamations in the first few lines (08) |
| | Beauty (45) | | I liked it the most. (12) |
| | Because of what I said above. Good impact would be A (65) | | Because of its eroticism! (22) |
| | | | erotic language choices (31) |
| | | | As it is quite graphic! (32) |
| | | | Very graphic – fondling and nipples (40) |
| | | | Because of the porn factor (50) |
| | | | Too much detail (62) |
| | | | I felt subject and tone were better matched than the others. (73) |
| | | | Unusual impact – it was so detailed, I got the giggles! (81) |
| | | | This one sounds the best to me. (86) |

| Song of Songs 7:6-9a | | | |
|---|---|--|---|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| | | | Very direct, not avoid overt sexuality (88) |
| | | | aroma of nipples?? or aroma of breath. (89) |
| | | | SEE 2. ABOVE (90) |
| | | | |
| 5. Which version was the easiest to understand? | | | |
| Verse easy (04) | Because of what has been said above (65) | see question 2 (08) | Doesn't use the word "stature" and while "slim" works, I think "figure" is what most guys would say. (12) |
| | | It conveys the message in a straightforward and unadorned manner (22) | While distasteful, its explicit profanity is unmistakably clear (26) |
| | | (somewhat off topic, but I liked the innocent excitement that is displayed at the end through the exclamation mark) (62) | Do I really need to say why?!! (32) |
| | | | Less poetry and imagery, and just says it like it is! (54) |
| | | | because the interpreter has made connections for you – unwisely as it locks in your mindset. (64) |
| | | | MORE EXPLICIT (90) |
| | | | |
| 6. Which version was the most beautiful or poetic? | | | |
| Line 7 is the best interpretation of the four versions and most poetic (07) | Its hymnic tone of praise of beauty rather than mere self-indulgence (26) | I think it has more "song" in it when I recite it in my head. (12) | see question 4 (08) |
| The phrase "lay hold" is nice, but the rest of the passage is not over the top. (62) | | It has a simple flow of meaning (22) | not sure (09) |
| It leaves enough to the imagination, but still conveys the sense of what has been said about the beautiful gift that God has designed in the love between a man and a woman. (65) | | it seems to have a more poetic format (64) | language choice that push the boundaries (31) |
| | | Descriptive without being too much. (81) | It simply was, but it might not be to |

| Song of Songs 7:6-9a | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| A – ESV | B – NIV | C – NLT | D – Poetic |
| | | | everyone's taste...(no pun intended!) (32) |
| | | | |
| 7. If you gave a copy of this passage to a friend, which version would you choose? | | | |
| Feels genuine (04) | because I prefer it (07) | As above (22) | I want my friend to know that God gave us sex as a gift and I think this version best expresses that. (12) |
| Liked it the most (09) | It is a classical piece of poetic and clear praise (26) | For the reasons above (23) | For fun (50) |
| I think it allows a sense of sensuality without the confronting language of preinterpretation as not all SOS should be viewed with inference that it is only sexual it is about relationship. Sorry to be preachy Thomas! (64) | The safest option! (32) | I would choose clear yet poetic (C) or impact (D) (31) | |
| Because of its ability to convey the message without arousing undue interest in the content. (65) | Because it states the point (which is a delicate point of itself) without overstating the tone (62) | | |

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VITA

Full name: Thomas Geoffrey Hemphill

Date and Place of Birth: 26 September 1969, Sydney, NSW, Australia

Education/Degrees:

B.Com., University of Queensland, 1993.

Dip.C.Min., Strikeforce Ministry Training Institute (Brisbane), 1995.

M.Div., Australian College of Theology, 2005.

B.A. (Hons.), University of Queensland, 2011.

Years of D.Min. work: 2016-present

Expected Graduation: May, 2019